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What's on tap for U.S. troops in the Balkans? *SOF* details what led to war, what we can expect from the Serbs, and how you can help the Kosovars. Story on page

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## FEATURES

### TERRORISM 101, Part II

Richard L. Sherrow

In this segment, we present a dissection of the more noteworthy global terrorist groups, their histories and a rapsheet of dubious violent achievements.

### LET THE BOMBS BEGIN ...

Mark H. Milstein

*SOF* correspondent watched the bombs fall in Belgrade and then endured 22 hours of beatings and threats in a dank, vermin-friendly Serbian slam.

### BIG BUCKS IN BRUTALITY

Al J. Venter

Lucrative freelance contracts abound in violence-steeped Africa. Grim news for the locals — but glad tidings for hired guns.

### KALASHNIKOV'S NEW .308 VEPR

Peter G. Kokalis

Americans can import this wild "bore" from Russia — an affordable RPK light machine gun derivation that's durable and accurate.

### BACK TO BAGHDAD

Mark H. Milstein

Iraq might not be the end of the world! — but you can sure see it from there. In rebuilt Baghdad, Saddam's loyalists gear up for a U.S. invasion.

### ROAD WARRIORS

Rob Krott

*SOF* prowls the asphalt jungle with the South African Police Service Anti-Hijacking Unit as car theft — and worse — reach monstrous proportions.

### SERB THREAT ASSESSMENT

John Hogan

As American forces lock and load for likely ground combat in Kosovo, we get a sneak preview of the Serbs' order of battle from the driver's seat.

### AMERICANS JOIN THE KLA

John Hogan

A few good men, and women, are on their way to Albania to join the KLA. This is their story and a timeline that led to war.

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# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

## A Dirty Little Corps For Dirty Little Wars Why America Needs A Foreign Legion

American foreign policy that requires the projection of military power is being held captive by the specter of fuzzy-cheeked American boys coming home in bodybags. This specter has caused America to hesitate sending ground forces into Kosovo, when decisive action might have saved untold Kosovar lives.

American angst over using its military in a potentially bloody ground war to achieve foreign policy goals is a relatively new, and disturbing, trend. For our 200 years Americans have not viewed war with favor, but have never hesitated to commit our sons to terrible battle.

But those days are no more.

Winning the Cold War left America as the only superpower, but perplexingly, increasingly uncomfortable in that role when conflicts broke out in Africa and the Balkans over long-standing ethnic, racial and religious differences.

Today we are on the verge of a war we are not prepared to fight, capable of fighting immediately, or willing to fight. Our legislators are just not prepared to field calls from soccer moms across the nation if things go wrong and planes of bodybags start flying into Dover AFB.

We have an Army that is tough and capable. What we need is an army that is tough, capable and expendable: A force of young, single, hard, healthy, superbly trained and equipped men with linguistic and cross-cultural skills that would be useful in foreign climes. A force that can be committed to battle for the duration. Spirited armies of grunts led by our best professionals, with little logistical tail and no requirement to defend and explain in detail its plans and tactics.

Where do we find this army? Where the French found their Foreign Legion, and the British found their Gurkhas — abroad.

We need a force where all the grunts are graduates of a fierce and rigorous selection

and training program, but then well-paid and equipped with the best we have to offer in materiel, leadership and support. An army that trains, lives, goes to war together and stays together to the end and beyond — win or lose.

In short order we could recruit and train three divisions (for the Americas, Mediterranean and Pacific). There are still enough soldiers around, in or out of current forces, who remember how it was done to stock the force with NCOs and officers through its early days to instill what it takes to win — and how to win.

American NCOs and officers who would form the leadership cadre initially, should be pulled from our best forces — Rangers, Special Forces, Marines and SEALs, and, like Lincoln, our political leaders should search long and hard for battalion, brigade and division commanders who understand the purpose of war: winning. We need hardened warriors, not careerists with their hearts set on a soft chair in front of a button-filled console at the Pentagon.

Permanently stationed abroad, the AEF would be available on short notice for long-term deployment to places that today bring chills to the hearts of thousands of American mothers and fathers. Consider the resource a well-trained, professionally led AEF division, whose CNN-filmed bodybags would not cause a change in foreign policy or public support, would be tomorrow morning in Kosovo.

Every great nation that found itself in America's position — from Rome to France to England — has eventually looked outward to find fighters to handle their unfashionable wars: Roman Auxiliaries, French Legionnaires and British Gurkhas contributed greatly in their time and hold a hallowed place in military history.

An American Expeditionary Force could, as well. ✘

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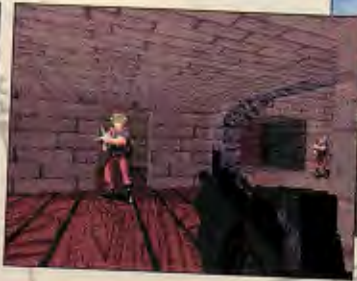
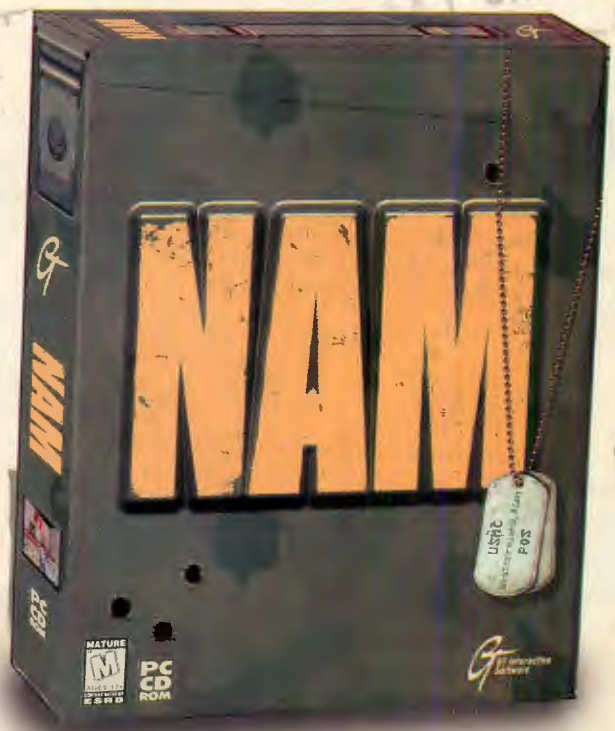
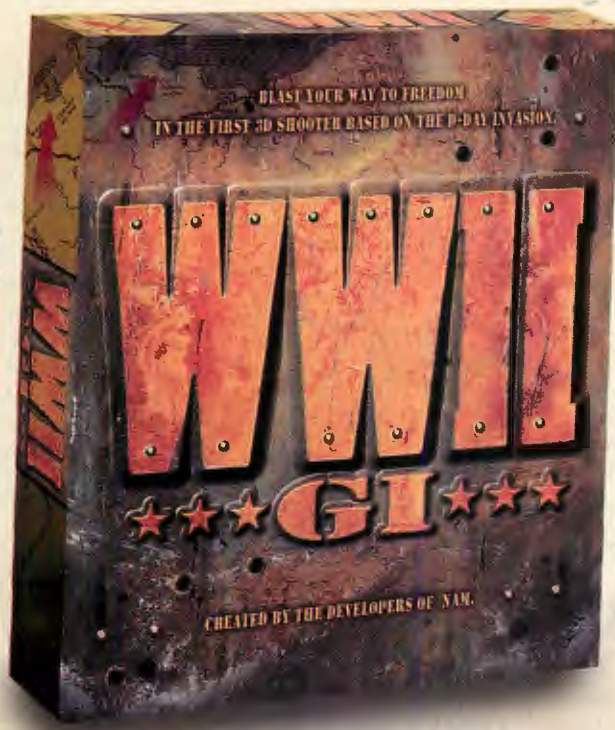
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## Ibrahim Linconovic Brigade?

Could you provide any information on a contact path for an individual(s) to volunteer to assist the KLA in Kosovo, or in any info in that direction? Thank you for your time.

C.L. Gilliland  
CGillil@aol.com

As we understand the vagaries of the Neutrality Act, it may not be illegal for an American to fight under a foreign flag as long as he does so without swearing allegiance to a foreign power/repudiate his allegiance to the USA, etc., as evidenced by Yanks fighting for Canada/England before we entered WWII, joining the French Foreign Legion, fighting in Rhodesia or the Israeli armed forces and so on. However it is our understanding that it is not legal to organize/launch, or recruit for, a military organization or effort against, or on behalf of, a foreign state from American soil. Thus, probably the best anyone in the U.S.A. would be able legally to do is refer you to an overseas contact point in response to an inquiry initiated by you. One Stateside contact point for the Albanian community is the Albanian-language newspaper, *Illyria*, 2321 Hughes Ave., Bronx, NY 10458-8120; phone: 718-220-2000; fax: 718-220-9618; E-mail: [IllyriaNWS@aol.com](mailto:IllyriaNWS@aol.com) or [3256@compuserve.com](mailto:3256@compuserve.com). They in turn may know of an overseas contact with information for people who want to assist the KLA.

Another possibility is to surf the internet, bearing in mind that there you never really know who you are talking to, and vetting internet contacts is well nigh impossible.

But the first call we recommend you make is to your attorney, to ensure whatever you contemplate is legal.

## Fashion Fatigue

I am really getting tired of your articles on the K.L.A. and the Albanians dressed in designer jeans holding rifles. Maybe in your next issue you should do an article on the

Serbian forces just to provide some balance in your coverage. If I did not know any better I'd say that your magazine is funded by the Albanian lobby or that you have an Albanian as an editor.

Doug Kostic  
Port Coquitlam, B.C. Canada

Doug, thanks for a letter we can reply to. First, as an aside, we've never seen a genuine pair of designer anything in Eastern Europe — they are invariably unlicensed knockoffs in varying degrees of quality, often as not made in the PRC.

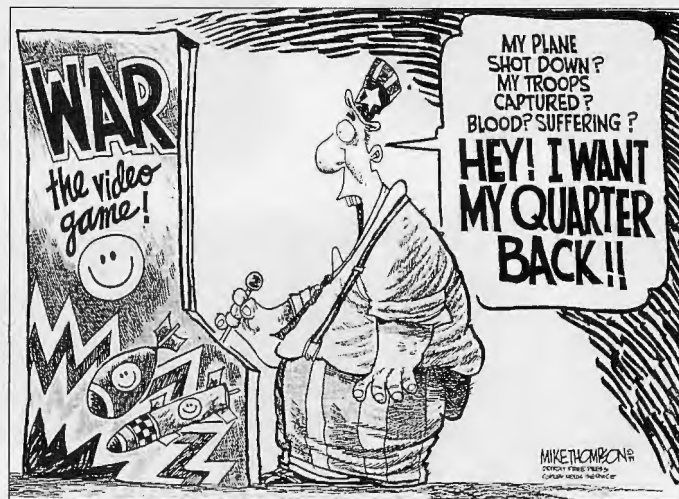
For an article on Serbian forces, see correspondent Mark Milstein's story in this

few years regarding the various parties to the mess in the Balkans was predicated upon what we saw there on the ground — not what some staff member's grandpa tol' him. Just for the record, at the onset of the current grief in the former Yugoslavia, we were if anything predisposed toward the Serbs because of the Serbian people's courageous assistance to downed American flyers fighting a common enemy in WWII. But in spite of what somebody's father may have done, we could in no way be supportive of those who commit such widespread and inhuman atrocities against their perceived enemy, particularly against non-combatants such as women and children, as the Serb government has done as a matter of policy.

There probably are no completely innocent groups in the Balkans, as the tribal, pre-medieval mindset so widespread there makes inhuman treatment of an enemy — or an enemy's great-great grandchild or wife or daughter — acceptable. But whatever an insane history may have held, there is no conceivable justification to continue it. None. It must be stopped, with outside military action, if that's what it takes. Were our fellow Americans or any bloc thereof to ever mistreat millions of our countrymen or neighbors as was done in Bosnia and as is being done in Kosovo as we write this, we

would hope an outside power would do whatever it takes to stop such atrocities, national sovereignty notwithstanding.

Thanks again for your letter. Unfortunately, the one below is more typical. We are neither ignorant of Serbian and Balkan history, nor unsympathetic to the concerns of the Serbian people. We are unsympathetic to tyranny, atrocity and inhumanity. And in this recent history, we regret we have been forced to the conclusion that Serbia is not the lesser of the evils in the Balkans today.



issue. I hope you think it's balanced, as it's a little hard to keep your balance when a circle of drunken Serb cops have you on the floor kicking and spitting on you for the terrible offense of stopping at their checkpoint. Of course, that wasn't Milstein's first story on the Serb forces: first time they disturbed his balance it was by targeting him with a mortar (which is OK, he didn't spend that much time in the hospital, and he already walked funny anyway). His offense that time was being a photojournalist where the Serb forces were busy tending to ethnic cleansing, setting up rape camps or something and did not want to be disturbed.

Although the staff and correspondents at SOF represent a wide ethnic mix, as it happens we do not have any Slavs of any stripe aboard, particularly any Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, Montegrans etc., so we have no ethnic axe to grind. Whatever editorial outlook we have developed over the past

## Yo' Mamma

F\*\*\* you,

F\*\*\* you you Serb-hating bastards. Soon you meet your fuerher in hell and your mother feels my mighty c\*\*k up her rape-camp f\*\*\*\*\*-a\*\*. And if any of your

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Well, at least you didn't accuse us of being victims of the superior Croat or Albanian propaganda machines — not that they need any as long as they have you. Milos, if you're going to assume to speak for a people or a cause, before anybody will listen to you, you're just going to have to stop being a punk. Rape camp? Is that the best you can come up with? You wouldn't make a wart on a real Chetnik's butt.

## No Dog In This Fight

I oppose any hostile action in Kosovo. It's about time we realize that nobody appointed us world cops, so we can risk our lives and health of our military personnel in still another no-win war. Yugoslavia has been engaged in internecine warfare for centuries, strictly on ethnic, linguistic and religious differences. Hitler could not vanquish the Chetniks, and Tito was successful in maintaining Yugoslavia's maverick stance even during the Soviet domination period. We have no dog in this fight, inasmuch as our sovereign territory is not threatened.

May I suggest we focus our attention on the Chinese and North Korean threat to our Republic, and take action to apprehend and punish those who have engaged in high treason against the USA by divulging nuclear targeting data to our enemy. In the meantime, please vote for an effective anti-missile defense system, which we will certainly need once Mr. Clinton's Chinese partners develop an effective delivery vehicle.

Jean-Pierre A. Maldonado  
Centreville, MD

## Balkans Balk

Your editorial was on the mark. We are meddling in affairs in a troubled part of the world. Some of these ethnic groups are known drug smugglers. Hatred and revenge are their code. Where is the National interest? Why did we spend \$7 trillion fighting a cold war yet never got tough with Russia, or China, like we are now in the Balkans? Today Clinton says we shouldn't think of China as a potential adversary, that we must change our thinking. Tell that to Taiwan, and other countries in that region, or is it Clinton's campaign money talking? Where are the conservative Republican majority —presiding over an undeclared war that will cost us treasure and soldier's lives?

Thomas Scherrer  
trs911worldnet.att.net ✉

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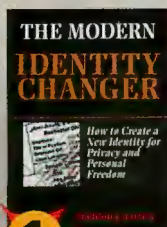
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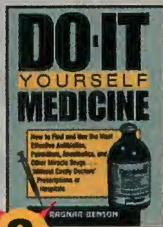
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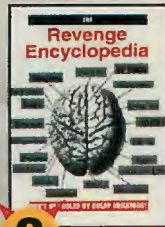
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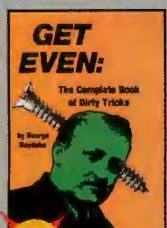
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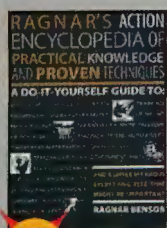
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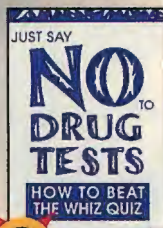
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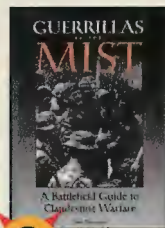
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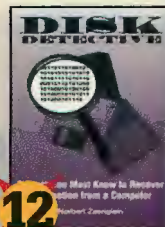
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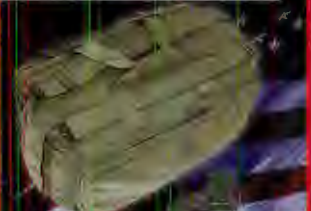
The Blackhawk Omega 45 cal. Drop Log Pistol Mag pouch is one of over 30 holsters and grenade pouches designed by the pros who use them.




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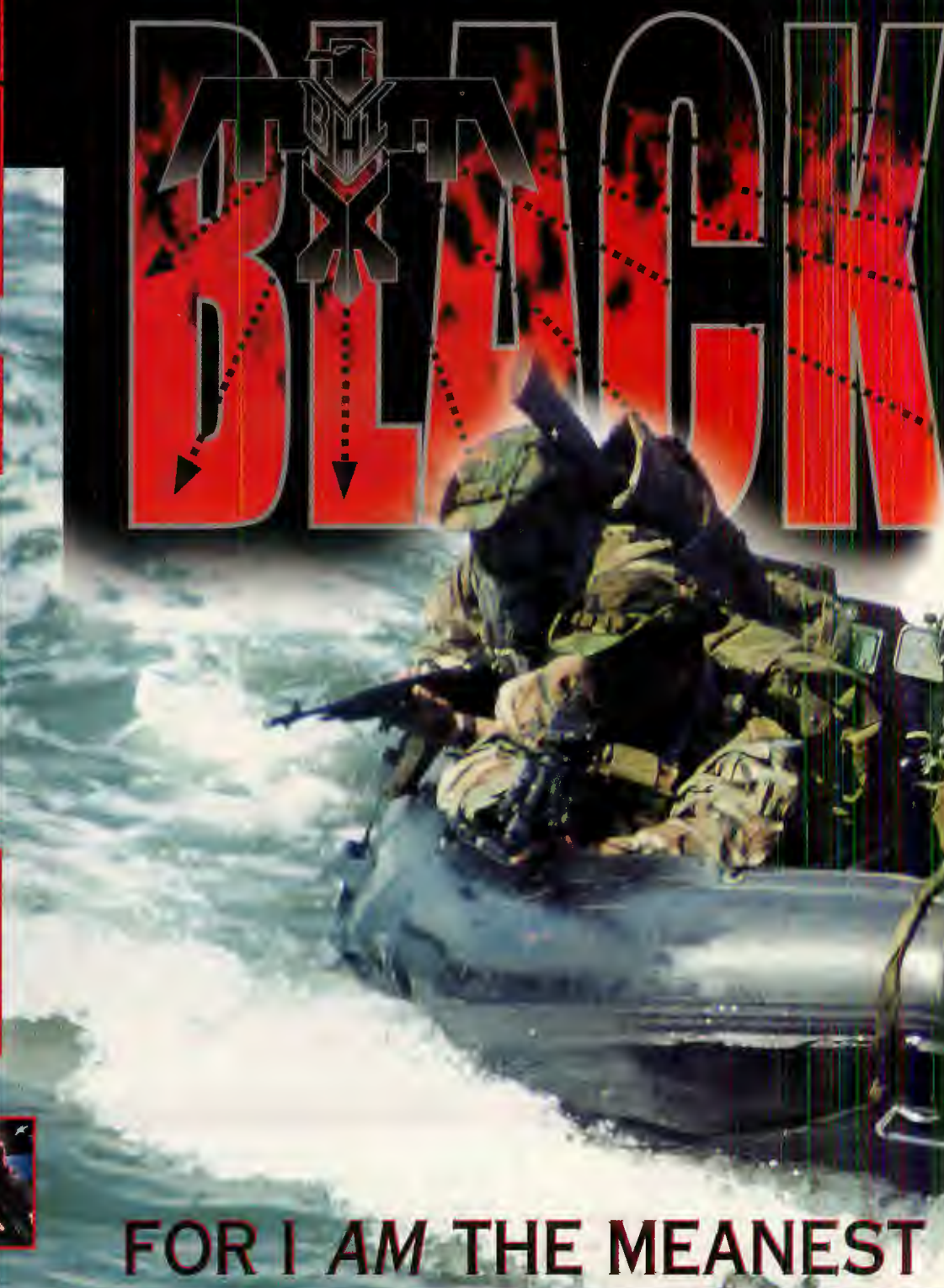
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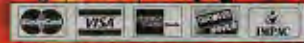
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# BULLETIN BOARD

## E-Mail A Yellow Ribbon

Southwestern Bell and Pacific Bell have created free E-mail addresses for families of the three American soldiers now held in Yugoslavia. Those who want to send messages of support can do so at these addresses:

SSGT Christopher Stone: [ssoldier@swbell.net](mailto:ssoldier@swbell.net)  
SPC Steven M. Gonzales: [tsoldier@swbell.net](mailto:tsoldier@swbell.net)  
SSGT Andrew A. Ramirez: [casoldier@pacbell.net](mailto:casoldier@pacbell.net)

## Surplus Choppers to Bosnian-Croats

A second lot of eight surplus Bell UH-1H utility craft have been delivered to the Bosnian-Croat Federation under the U.S.-sponsored Equip and Train program. Thus far, 15 such aircraft have been donated to equip the federation's rapid-reaction force.

## American Knife & Tool Institute

Everyone who makes knives, sells knives, collects knives or uses knives now has an organization dedicated to providing a unified voice for the knife-making and knife-using community. American Knife and Tool Institute — AKTI — plans to promote the general public's awareness of the history and utility of knives as

tools, and to encourage sensible knife legislation and responsible law enforcement, while educating young people about proper safety and the responsible use of knives. Knives are man's third-oldest tool, still one of the most useful, and probably the most universal.

If you are in the knife arena, you should join this synergistic endeavor, which will ultimately benefit all makers and users of knives. For more information, contact: Jan Billeb, Executive Director, AKTI, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 68, Burlington, IA 52601-0068; phone: 319-752-8770; fax: 319-752-6114; e-mail: [AKTI@lisco.net](mailto:AKTI@lisco.net); website: [AKTI.org](http://AKTI.org)

## International Confederation of Revolver Enthusiasts

The newly elected Board of Directors of ICORE has announced the 8th annual Smith & Wesson International Revolver Championship (IRC), being held 16-18 July 1999 at the Hogue Action Pistol Range, San Luis Obispo Sportman's Association, in Morrow Bay, California. Wheelgunners should contact Chairman Mike Ballard for more details at 800-438-4747, ext. 645; or 805-466-4234; by mail to Box 20664, Mesa, AZ 85277-0664; or electronically at <http://www.icore.org>

## Very High Power

The .50 BMG is not just a machine-gun round any more. Starting with a few eccentric big-bore enthusiasts shooting former

## U.S.M.C. Fighting/Utility Knives



## KA-BAR Knives

- An American Legend - the knife Marines depended on during WWII
- Oval handle constructed of compacted leather disks
- High carbon steel (1095) blade, black epoxy powder coated, buff polished, razor sharp edge, HRC 56-58
- Cowhide sheath with U.S.M.C. "Eagle and Globe" crest included
- Blade length 7"; overall 11 7/8"

### KYDEX SHEATH FOR U.S.M.C. FIGHTING/UTILITY KNIFE #1216

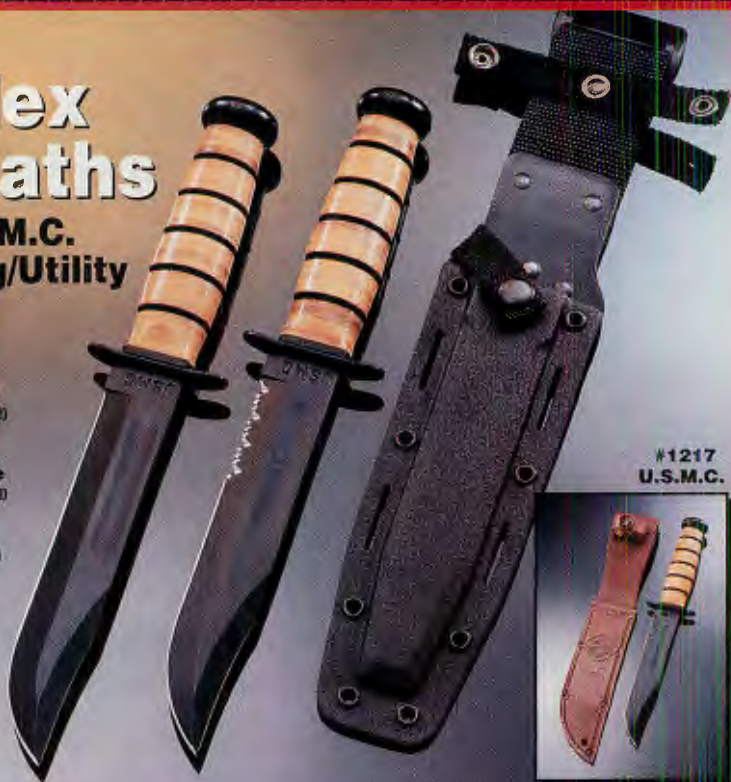
- All weather performance, impact corrosion and abrasion resistant
- Ambidextrous - right or left handed
- Wide belt loop with slip locks

## Kydex Sheaths for U.S.M.C. Fighting/Utility Knives

#1217 Straight Edge (Leather sheath included)

#1218 Serrated Edge (Leather sheath included)

#1216 Kydex Sheath (sold separately)




#1217 U.S.M.C.

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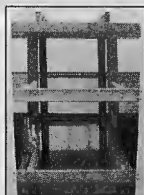
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GI AT rifles from England, Germany and Czechoslovakia, a thriving and sophisticated shooting subculture has developed over the past three decades or so, dedicated to shooting the .50 Browning round. Capable of astounding accuracy with the right load in the right rifle fired by the right marksman, the .50 Browning round has inspired the development of totally new rifle designs for the civilian and professional (as in *police* and *military*) marksman.

The critical mass for this sport has to be the 1,700 members of the .50 Caliber Shooters Association, and their most interesting publication *Very High Power* (they modestly call it a newsletter, but it's an entirely credible full-size quarterly magazine). The FCSA has a special police and military liaison who is ready to assist with any professional questions. The FCSA is an international organization, with shooters of both sexes.

For further information regarding the activities of and membership in the FCSA, check out their web page: [www.fcsa.org](http://www.fcsa.org); or contact their secretary by snail mail: Terri Burt, Box 5109, Riverside, CA 92517; phone: 909-653-5447.

## State Defense Forces

Some 22 states now have state guards, dedicated to service and to the ultimate support of civil authority (as opposed to dedicated self-serving causes and running around Wal-Mart in cammies). If your state does not have a state guard organization and you are interested in forming one, contact the State Guard Association of the U.S., Inc., P.O. Box 206, Lothian, MD 20711.

## Korean War Vets, Note

National and international events are scheduled to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Korean War. As only 20% of Korean War vets belong to veterans organizations, the other 80% are being sought by the U.S. Korea 2000 Foundation in order they may know of the events that will mark the anniversary during 2000-2003.

They need your full name, mailing address, phone/fax and/or e-mail address — and your dates of service in Korea and the branch and unit(s) served with. Immediate family members of deceased Korean War vets are also encouraged to participate.

Contact: U.S. Korea 2000 Foundation, 4600 Duke St., Suite 416, Alexandria, VA 22304-2517; fax: 703-684-0193; e-mail: [USKorea2K@aol.com](mailto:USKorea2K@aol.com)

## New Gun Trade Association

The "Hunting and Shooting Sports Heritage Foundation" has been formed among leading manufacturers of firearms, ammunition and related sporting equipment, to "deliver a coordinated message of

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# Get My FREE Report On Lethal Fighting—And I Guarantee For The Rest Of Your Life You won't Lose Using My System. And I Put It In Writing!

*This man had 3 high-ranking black belts and over 300 street-fights in 20 years, yet 15 minutes of this undefeatable system he knew Jerry's guarantee was for real. Let him tell his story.*

Let me tell you buddy, when you have a little age on your butt and there are four Gang-Bangers shoving you around and making rude gestures at your wife, you want to act. Look, I didn't care about getting pushed but if they touched my wife I was in the game. Only this is no game. There's four scumbags with weapons moving all around me. I can take one out with a kick. But by the time my foot comes down, two of them will stab me in the back. If I body-tackle the biggest and grapple him down to choke him out, the other 3 will just kick my head off. Or the guy with the gun will shoot my knee-cap off and I will be helpless as they rape my wife.

## Wake Up! Street-Fighting Skills Aren't Enough!!!

You better wake up out there, this is the real world. Not even my street-fighting told me how to handle this. I was lucky they weren't out for blood. They just wanted to intimidate me. I was damn angry. Not at what happened. Hell, my ego wasn't the deal. Staying alive was! I just realized that I spent \$5,000-7,000 hard-earned dollars (not to mention the years) to learn what only works in a ring or a cage with referees and men that think they can street-fight. Yeah, they pick up a chair or use a broken bottle or knife but they never really know what they're doing. Look, let's just stop here, if you've read this far you're probably one **Tough SOB** like me, if you're not, **stop** reading this information. It's not for the weak-willed who have to get drunk to get up the guts to have a slap fight. It's for **you** real men that want to know the TRUTH about **lethal fighting skills**. I knew that after 5 minutes of watching Jerry Peterson's lethal SCARS® system he was nothing short of revolutionary. He'll change your mind about power and fear. I don't know if you believe in a God but Jerry must be talking to him. There's just no other answer to how he solves complex fighting problems. Jerry says, "It's in the math but it doesn't hurt to have **God** on your side." Don't make the mistake I did in '93, the first time I read about this system, "Thinking how could it be true?"

## This Guy Is "Nothing But Hype"

**Wrong**, the documentation is there. The government backs it up. He's taught, developed and standardized combat schools for the SEALs and other Special Operations Forces not just in the US but also with NATO groups.

## Ask Yourself, "Can I Handle The Truth?" If You Can, Then Here Is Real Credibility.

Jerry Peterson's SCARS was demonstrated on a secure military base, in true combat fashion, to no less than the *US Secretary of Defense*, the leading *4 Star General*, plus the *Secretary of the Navy* and powerful *Congressional Leaders*. They all watched in total amazement as the SEAL's executed fighting skills never before seen, absolutely flawless on every combat action they took using guns, knives, full gear, single and multi-fighting and most impressively their bare hands. **SCARS never failed them and it will never fail YOU!!!**

## If That Doesn't Blow Your Mind This Will

You can bet your life on this man's credibility, 30,000 other professional men have. You can't waste one more day learning a sport system that has counters to every move. **With SCARS you're undefeatable!** Look, do you think Jerry could have achieved his renown credibility if the secret SCARS science of lethal combat could be countered. Absolutely not! The fact is, Jerry Peterson is the one civilian in the history of the USA to have accomplished such professional credibility. I challenge you to find one individual that has ever gotten their fighting system to be reviewed by such powerful leaders at the same time. Of course, to make it more unfair, also get the official stamp of approval for implementing their system as required training for the US military. Want to check this out? Here is just one of the official course numbers K-431-0096, check it out with the Navy. I did, boy was I impressed when they gave me the list of what this guy has done. It only took me six months. Damned bureaucratic red tape!

## Want More Credibility?

Jerry Peterson's SCARS project is the only system ever to pass all the combat requirements of the United States Defense Department. Then to go one better he raised that standard and personally trained the elite Navy SEALs, some made it, some didn't. But those that did today hold the coveted SCARS/CFC qualification of subject matter experts in the field of hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon combat. By the way, this qualification becomes part of their official military records. In fact, there would be no experts if Jerry Peterson did not license the **SCARS-Combat Fighting Course** to the Navy. Are you getting the picture? Don't wait as I did. Don't be fooled by the follower's...

## You Know The 'Little Men'

Ever since 1993, self-proclaimed military 'gurus' and some street-fighters have been **following Jerry** making clever claims, *if you read between the lines there's nothing but ambiguous claims and self-given titles*. Have you noticed nobody produces any official paperwork?

## Jerry Peterson Is Absolutely For Real

This is what you'll find out. Don't wait. Let go of the past and learn the science of Lethal Combat. This is the first and only original Navy SEAL System. **YOUR LIFE WILL DEPEND ON IT!** Sorry, I'm jumping ahead let me explain why the martial arts can't and won't get the official documentation. First the system has to be universal to all men. This means that 100 men go in. One-hundred men come out 100% efficient in all aspects of CQB (close quarters battle). To prove that the government must test, and test SCARS they did, for over five years in real field conditions, on all terrains, including water with real weapons and in real conflicts. I'm not going to get into all the government testing, that will take forever. Plus there are some we can't talk about. But in all those years SCARS never failed **EVER!!** And that's why it's still the standard.

**In Fact SCARS Set "New Standards"...** for hand to hand, knife fighting, rifle combat, and much more. SCARS is also taking the Law Enforcement community by

storm. The summer Olympics Special Security team was required to take our IQS-1 Series just to qualify to get on the team and **YOU** can have that same knowledge and training. This is your once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to become **undefeatable** (with or without a weapon) with the **SCARS Professional Fighting System**. Why?

## Because Your Life Is Worth Saving

SCARS will not fail **you**. That's why the US Navy SEAL's, government agents and law enforcement agencies throughout the world are using this easily learned, but lethal, system to save lives. You will know it works after seeing Jerry's powerful unbelievably easy to learn video tapes. Look, you'll receive more knowledge in one hour from Jerry Peterson's videos on fighting than two decades of so-called 'Secret' Martial Arts. Thanks to Jerry's revolutionary training method of Gestalt, it won't take you years, months, weeks, or days, in just a few short hours of watching you will easily handle any bad guy that comes your way!!! I can't tell you the 'god-like' power you get from the truth of this system!

## I'm Telling You SCARS Is So Easy And So Devastating, It's 'Embarrassing'.

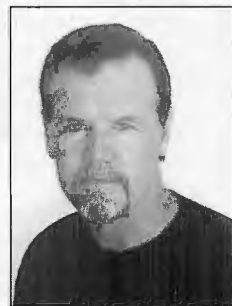
You will resist at first. You will say bullsh-t! Then you start recalling your real fights on the street. Punches and kicks you have done. You try what-if-ing everything he says. Why? Because he is stripping you of the lies you based your manhood on, he is telling you and showing the cold logic of the fight, ripping apart the lie of defensive action and replacing it with brutal science of combat. Be prepared, it's brutal. The foundation of SCARS is solely mathematical, it follows that the results are absolute, and not emotionally motivated. To a layman it will seem to be quite brutal. However this is pure science of human movement for the purpose of protecting your life. Since it is science, every move in every lesson seamlessly adapts to all modern and ancient weapons. You never waste time learning useless punching and kicking or grappling moves that **DON'T** work with weapons. With Jerry's system you can take the weapon out and you're still a lethal fighter. SEALs using SCARS have never been beaten. Now is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get Jerry's—

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Jerry Peterson



industry responsibility and to challenge vigorously misrepresentations of industry positions and practices." The new foundation will serve to coordinate policies and practices of existing industry associations, such as the American Shooting Sports Council, the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturer's Institute. Interested parties may contact Doug Painter at HSSHF, 11 Mile Hill Rd., Newtown, CT 06470; Phone: 203-426-1320.

## Human Cost in Sudan Nearing 2 Million

According to a report by the U.S. Committee for Refugees, the civilian death toll in Sudan's 15 years of civil war has risen to at least 1.9 million, making it the most costly ethnic or religious conflict since World War II. The bulk of the deaths to non-combatants has occurred mostly in south and central Sudan, and have been caused by fighting, war-caused famine and disease. The Committee condemned the Khartoum government for policies "that have spread conflict, forces southern Sudanese to relocate and blocked relief efforts by the UN and international relief agencies."

Roger Winter, director of the Committee, noted that the human cost of this conflict "is greater than the combined civilian deaths in Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda and a number of other places" but that the "international community seems not to be interested." Deaths among combatants was estimated as probably in the "tens of thousands."

## Kopters Y2K Kompliant

The Army's primary combat helicopters, the AH-64 Apache Longbow and Bell-TEXtron OH-58D Kiowa Warrior, have undergone initial Year 2000 tests at White Sands Missile Range, New



courtesy Dr. Robert Cleaves

**Rich Man's Viagra:** Dr. Bob Cleaves, of the Wilderness Conservancy, kneels with a manacled poacher and the horns from an endangered black rhino, in South Africa's Tembe Elephant Park. Flying along the Mozambique border retesting an anti-poaching aircraft, Cleaves spotted three poachers and radioed their location to KwaZulu-Natal game scouts on the ground, who moved in for the arrest. Kudos to Dr. Cleaves and the KwaZulu-Natal Scouts! Note scout in upper right of photo holds a Ruger Mini-14 rifle: In addition to donating rifles and spare synthetic stocks to Zambian game officials, Bill Ruger also armed the KwaZulu scouts with rifles and scopes. There are talkers and there are doers. Bill Ruger built an empire by being a doer, and is now in a position to hit some licks for what's right; he's a doer in the conservation arena, too.

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It's an exclusive original work of art by Boris Vallejo, the most widely collected fantasy artist of our time. Appearing for the first time on this collector knife. The fully sculptured grip, accented with sterling silver, takes the form of a Dragon with a fiery-red crystal cobalt eye. The flame-shaped stainless steel blade is emblazoned with a golden flame to symbolize its fiery breath. And Boris Vallejo's full-color depiction of *The Mistress of Fire* is set into the handle at the very heart of the Dragon.

Important as it is exciting, this is Boris Vallejo's first collector knife. A showpiece to treasure. In a Limited Edition forever restricted to just 45 casting days. Imported, with padded and zippered case. **Just \$37.50.**

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I need SEND NO MONEY NOW. I will be billed \$37.50\* when my knife is ready to be shipped to me. **Limit: one knife per collector.**

*\*Plus my state sales tax and \$3.95 for shipping and handling.*

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TELEPHONE # (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

20055-128-001

Mexico. Results were "missiles will fire and communications links will remain intact when the year 2000" rolls over, according to a report in *Jane's Defence Weekly*.

In a related matter, a report by the DoD Inspector General notes that some 12,000 commercially procured Global Positioning System receivers may be vulnerable to the Y2K bug, as they have not yet been inventoried or made compliant. Among hardware that use uncorrected receivers are included such items as Navy Tomahawk cruise missiles and P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft, Air Force C-17, C-130 and C-141 transports and the KC-135 tanker. Hand-held units for combat troops are also at risk.

Some of the receivers are used by civilian government agencies, defense contractors and allied countries. The GPS receivers in question were made by more than 70 companies worldwide, and are not among the 15 various types as procured from the USAF-directed GPS program office at Los Angeles AFB. The constellation of 24 American GPS satellites are deemed Y2K compliant, as are receivers that have been procured from the GPS program office.

## SEAL History

*The Complete History of the Navy SEALs*, a Bud Brutsman Twilight Works' feature on the History Channel this July, will cover the Navy's commandos from when they were frogmen in shorts and swimfins during World War II, to today's elite high-tech warriors. With emphasis on the men themselves, the show will also examine the future of the SEALs.

## Japan Arrests High-Tech Exec In Sales To China

Isao Sasaki, former senior managing director of Hitachi affiliate Ryokosha KK, has been arrested by Japanese officials and charged with responsibility for selling telecomparators to China via South

Korea. The company had also sent unauthorized personnel to install equipment and train workers at a plant in Harbin, China, in 1997, without clearance from the International Trade and Industry Ministry, which governs export of tools and machinery that could be used to make nuclear weapons.

In 1992, Japan Aviation Electronics Industry, controlled by NEC Corp., paid the United States a \$10 million settlement in a case that alleged the company sold navigational equipment for fighter planes to Iran without authorization.

In the 1980s, Toshiba Machine Co., an affiliate of Toshiba Corp., was penalized for selling American technology for computerized milling machines to the then-Soviet Union, which was used to silence the propellers on Soviet submarines.

The United States and Japan are party to multilateral agreements to control exports of potentially sensitive technology and equipment.

## Rhodesian War Website

Charles Lotter, author of *Rhodesian Soldier*, is assembling material for a new book. Those who fought in or are otherwise interested in the Rhodesian war should check out his website: <http://members.tripod.com/~Rhodesian/echoes.html>.

## Looking For A Few Good Deserters

"Operation Fugitive" is what the Russian military prosecutor's office calls its new effort to track down deserters. It is believed there are more than 5,000 deserters in the North Caucasian Military District alone. Meanwhile, more than 6,000 Army deserters surrendered to authorities in the first half of 1998, under promise of leniency for those who turn themselves in. In the southern Siberian Altai region, 182 deserters gave up, citing brutal treatment and poor conditions as the reasons they bugged out. ✂

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*Sie Hill*



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Only a select few Police and SWAT Teams have even seen this training!

# Get Your Hands On The

# LETHAL DEFENSE SYSTEM

The Cops **NEVER**  
wanted the public to see!

By Bob Pierce V. P. - TRS



## Instantly “Take Out Permanently” Any Attacker With Just A Few Simple Moves!

It's not a good thing to have high-ranking police officials mad at you... but since I've had the Pentagon so pissed it was ready to send a “black bag” team to my house (when I ran afoul of them during the DELTA/SEAL civilian boot camps we held two years ago), I figured having a few cops angry with me was worth the risk.

You see... I finally got my hands on the most secret cop-training video ever created — the one that teaches you how to instantly “take out permanently” any attacker with a few simple moves. That's “take out permanently” as in “kill”. It's the final word in self-defense — covering the one subject *no other teacher has dared to even talk about before*.

This video was created especially for the training of *hand-picked law enforcement personnel and federal agents...* and, for a very long time, has been purposely kept secret from civilians (as well as kept away from most cops — only a *select few* ever get to see this training!). In fact, for once I actually agree with the guys behind this secrecy — for most of the civilian population, this is just too “heavy”, and should remain a secret.

But also for the record... this ain't playtime anymore.

I have put my neck on the line to bring this video to you... and once you know these lethal tactics, you are on your own if you ever have to use them.

And... maybe... this video is just too “hot” for you. It's not for everybody — and I urge you to just ignore this article, unless you meet these minimum qualifications:

1. You understand that the protection of yourself and your loved ones is the *most important thing in the world...*
2. If it comes down to you... or the other guy... you have *zero doubt* in your mind that it must be the other guy who loses... and...
3. You understand that, as an adult who makes his own decisions in this big mean world, you are absolutely responsible for your actions. If you are forced to use these tactics to save your life (or the lives of your loved ones), and you take a fall... you're on your own. Don't come running to me. I'm just the messenger.

If you can't accept these terms — and accept them as a man whose word is his bond — then I will **NOT** allow this tape to be sent to you.

(continued on the next page)

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# Easy To Learn and Master...

On the other hand... if you can accept the responsibility necessary for learning these amazing life-saving (for you) fighting techniques... then read on. Because...

**This Will Be The Most Important Article  
You Have Ever Read!**

**Here's the story:** Several years ago, big-city police and sheriff departments in this country realized they needed better fighting skills against the criminals they encountered. Now, you have to realize that the combined cop forces of this state are massive, but fragmented... and the organized gangs and "families" and robbery teams here are better armed, more vicious, and utterly without remorse when it comes to killing. Often, they are high on steroids, methamphetamine ("speed"), and other drugs that make them immune to pain, and so permanently pissed-off that they will run through a hail of bullets to strangle a cop even as they bleed to death.

These criminals, by the way, are the same ones YOU will encounter in the street. The difference is, the cops have pistols, batons, mace and stun guns at the ready... while you, most often, will be bare-handed.

Of course, cops also find themselves in hand-to-hand combat for their lives... they are instructed **NOT** to use their weapons until the last second, and then it's often too late, and they're in close-quarters combat for serious blood. And when you're in a fight with someone who literally doesn't care if he OR you dies...

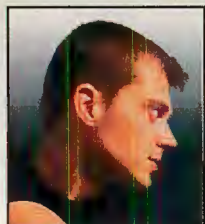
What the cops finally found was so amazingly "on the money", that the U.S. military even started paying attention. The skills you're about to learn are so simple... so easy... and yet so viciously-effective, that they match the more "pretty" killing skills of the most elite Special Forces in the world.

This training is vastly different than what a Navy SEAL might teach you. The SEAL is going against trained terrorists, skilled soldiers, and combat-intense situations. That's not what it's like in the streets of your town — your biggest fear isn't coming across a bazooka-carrying team of Iraqi terrorists... it's waking up to find a wild-eyed thug in your bedroom, or being surrounded in the theater parking lot by a gang of punks high on drugs.

What YOUR biggest worries are, crime-wise... are **EXACTLY** what cops and federal agents have to go against.

## About Ray Ellingsen

The man behind teaching these skills is **Ray Ellingsen**. Ray is one of the most respected "bounty hunters" in the business — a veteran trainer of a sensitive U.S. Military specialists, he honed his breathtaking fighting skills by fighting hand-to-hand with the kind of human scum you can only hope you'll never run into yourself. As a hot-shot "skip chaser", Ray's current job is hunting down the nastiest criminals who skip bail in Los Angeles (the most dangerous "market" in the U.S.). More than half of his take-downs involve serious violence — his life is on the line



every moment he's on the job, since the bastards he tracks down are the worst: Repeat violent offenders with rap sheets a yard long, and brain-curdling drug histories.

This training, frankly...

**Is Exactly What You Want To Learn For The Dangerous  
Situations You're Most Likely To Get Caught In!**

The cops begged for a few simple, easy-to-learn hand-to-hand skills that would allow them to end any confrontation in a heartbeat... with lethal force if necessary. That's what Ray gave them. Gangs and hardened criminals now think twice before attacking many big-city cops and sheriffs... because word has gotten out that the cops now know these deadly skills.

It's been the biggest secret in law enforcement. And now... if you're ready... I've made these skills available for you.

**This course is going to change your life, overnight.  
Here's what else you will learn:**

- The 5 simple ways to make yourself "untouchable" even if you are surprised by an attacker! (You don't need to be fast or have quick reflexes, once you know the secrets of "instant reaction" to violence.)
- The single best defensive move ever created — it's **ALL** you need to know to eliminate 99% of the force of any attacker's punch or charge! (And so simple, you will master it immediately, even *without practice!*)
- The secret of instantly regaining your balance at any point in a fight — a natural move that works like *magic* to keep you from going down, yet is unknown to most streetfighters!
- How to tap the source of devastating power in your body — without it, your strongest strike will lack force... with it, your most casual punch will carry the power of a *jackhammer!*
- Two breathtakingly simple ways to take down a larger and more pissed-off opponent... and make sure he stays down! (Not a lethal move, but a great way to end any fight **RIGHT NOW!**)
- How to turn a bad situation in a crowded place — like a bar — into a "non-situation" by **putting the bad guy on the floor!** (The reason most karate stuff doesn't work in the real world is that so much fighting happens in places where you have **NO** room to make your fancy moves and spinning kicks!)
- How to get out of a surprise choke-hold without getting hurt! (A move few fighters learn, and almost no attacker will expect... very simple to do, very *devastating* to the attacker!)
- Everything you need to know about surviving and winning against a **knife attack!** (Ray uses red paint on his practice knives to show how a knife fight *really happens*... this information *alone* will put you light-years ahead of other fighters, even if you've never been in a knife fight!)
- How to use a knife yourself... against an armed attacker... and against an unarmed attacker! (A knife — if you know how to use it — can be a great *equalizer* in an otherwise unfair fight against a bigger, meaner, more crazy man!)
- How sheriffs train to subdue prisoners in tiny cells — the hardest type of fighting there is! (Sheriffs must spend two years manning jails... and the most common injury for them occurs in tight quarters. Ray shows you how to **USE** the small space of a jail cell — just a bit bigger than a closet — to your advantage in a fight against a larger, more pissed-off man! Amazing stuff that can help you in a hallway, a small bathroom, or during a carjacking!)

"I wish I would have taken Ray Ellingsen's class years before when I was assigned to the jails, because it would have certainly saved me numerous dings and bruises. I work on a drug enforcement task force now, and I have had to defend myself several times in the line of duty. I have used the techniques and because of them, I have always come out on top!"  
Paul Motilla, Age 34, Deputy Sheriff Southern Ca.

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"As a film director, I've had to scout and work in some very dangerous locations around the world; places like Southeast Asia And some of America's toughest inner city neighborhoods. These locales are permanent "war zones" and I was looking for a self-defense system that was easy-to-learn, 100% effective and as extreme as I needed it to be. Ray has given me some amazing life-saving "tools" I can take with me anywhere I go in the world." Sean Entin - Film Director, Age 32, Hollywood, CA



# Devastatingly Effective!

- The 4 simple "natural weapons" on your body to use during a close-quarters fight... just knowing about these easy-to-use strikes gives you an "arsenal" that can make you *unbeatable* no matter how outsized or outweighed you are in a tight fight!
- The 4 secret "manipulation" spots on your opponent you can "play" like a piano to take him down and *put him under your complete control!*
- How to keep from being taken to the ground when *attacked by multiple opponents!* (It's the worst place you can be in a gang attack... but with Ray's training, you'll know exactly what to do to stay upright... and turn the attack around in a blink!)

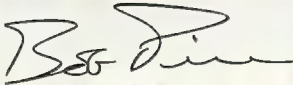


And more. These two tapes are crammed with the most intense, and most right-on fighting skills I've ever seen. As I said, cops swear by this training. I want to have these skills in case I need them, and I know you do, too. Here's what to do: Just call my office at 1-800-899-8153 (you can call anytime day or night) and say you want to order the "Cop Fighting Skills Package". Please fax the signed "Waiver" to 1-559-732-5537. Your special price is just \$39 (plus \$5 shipping and handling), and you can use your credit card. Or, if you prefer to pay by check or money order (payable to TRS) simply fill out the Order Form below and mail it with your signed "Waiver" (on the left, below). Either way, your package will be rushed to you by return mail.

I'm holding these packages — including your **free copy** of Ray Ellingsen's awesome weapons training video "Carry, Conceal & Draw" (yours to keep even if you return the rest of the package for a refund) and a **RARE GIFT** (a pocket-sized, very potent self-defense tool that is carried by the pros). You **MUST HURRY**. There are only 211 copies of this tape in my possession at the moment... so if you don't get back to me, someone else will walk away with **YOUR** free tape and gift. Don't let that happen. Call right now (or mail the coupon and waiver today).

You get our **most generous guarantee of satisfaction** — **3 months** to look everything over, and if you return the package for a refund, there will be **no questions asked, and no hassles whatsoever**. I am taking you as a man of your word.

Please, call right now. My secretary told me we've *already* gotten several calls, from guys who found out about this amazing video package from other cops. That doesn't surprise me — word of mouth on stuff as important and exciting as this goes *like wildfire*.

  
V. P., TRS



Order On-line @ [www.threatresponse.com](http://www.threatresponse.com)

## Video Purchase Responsibility "WAIVER"

I, (First Name) (Last Name), attest to the following facts and conditions in consideration of purchasing material containing information of a sensitive nature. I am at least 18 years of age. I am not a convicted felon, nor am I currently involved in any form of criminal prosecution, indictment or judicial process of any kind. I understand that the information presented within this video production is for demonstration and educational purposes only. I further understand that the use, practice or further dispensation of this material could possibly result in serious injury or death. I am aware that I should, whenever possible, avoid any physical confrontation. In the event of a hostile or life threatening encounter I understand that I am only legally allowed to use enough force to stop the threat or remove myself from the danger.

(First Name) (Last Name)

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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For Fastest Service, Use Your Credit Card And Call Toll-FREE  
**1-800-899-8153 (ask for Dept. LT-19)**

**YES!** I am absolutely ready to take the "ultimate" responsibility for the protection of my loved ones (and myself)... and I can see that Ray Ellingsen has exactly what I'm looking for. I also realize I risk **NOTHING** by ordering now, since I'm covered by a 100% money-back guarantee (with no questions asked) — therefore, please **RUSH** me this exciting video package. Here's how I want to pay:

I prefer to pay by credit card. Please charge my:

Visa  MasterCard  AmEx  Discover  
for \$44.00 (\$39.00 + \$5.00 Shipping & Handling)

Enclosed is my check/money order (payable to TRS)

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form to: TRS • 606 E. Acequia St., Dept. LT-19 • Visalia, CA 93292

CA & VA residents add appropriate sales tax. Rush shipping available for additional charges of \$10 for "2-Day" shipping and \$15 for "Overnight" shipping. Foreign orders may require additional shipping. Call (559) 732-5317 for more information

"I spent many years teaching hand-to-hand combat techniques to Marine recruits and would say that I am uniquely qualified to judge someone's abilities. Ray Ellingsen's abilities and tactics are truly exemplary. The information in these tapes meet the same rigid criteria that the Marine Corps demands of its fighting system; it must work...period. I believe it is one of the simplest and most effective methods of empty-handed fighting I have seen in my 24 year career."  
Robert Lindley - Gunnery Sgt. USMC (Ret.) Southern Ca

"This May while on patrol, I arrested two "bangers". One was pretty docile, but the other sprayed me with paint and tried to stab me with a Buck knife! I used the exact moves I learned from Ray Ellingsen and knocked the suspect to the ground and took away his knife. I was amazed at how calm I felt. Rays Ellingsen's training made the *life or death difference* in the way I handled myself and the situation." Bob Ramsey, Age 27, Deputy Sheriff Southern Ca.

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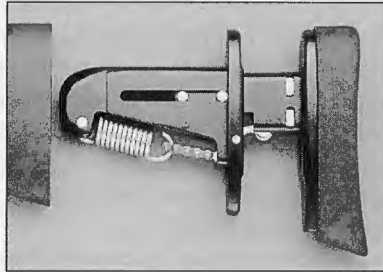
# ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

## Hogue's New CompStock

Harvesting birds and fowl when the shooting's good, trap and skeet tournaments, or heavy slugs and sabots in law enforcement shotguns all can take a toll on the shooter. You wear eye and hearing protection — why not give some consideration to your shoulder *before* continued punishment causes permanent — and needless — damage? Hogue's new CompStock OverMolded shotgun stocks promise truly effective recoil reduction for heavily loaded, or lightly loaded but heavily used, shotguns.

Initially available for the popular Remington 870, Mossberg 500 and Winchester 1300 series, the CompStock incorporates a patented recoil device — shown here with the rubber cover removed — that requires no adjustment and works equally well with heavy magnum or target loads. Using a distension spring and a unique roller cam lever that require no adjustment for differing loads, the CompStock is worth a try for anyone affected by the heavy recoil of a shotgun.

Hogue Inc., Dept. SOF, Box 1138, Paso Robles, CA 93447; phone: 805-239-1440; fax: 805-239-2553.



## Pentagon Elite

Knives and tools by the folks at SOG Specialty Knives need no introduction to *SOF* readers, but there is a new addition to their line that is worthy of note: the Pentagon Elite. Its basic arrangement is a spear-point folder, currently a fairly popular design, but there are a number of features on the Pentagon Elite that make me wonder if they've been reading my mail. I've missed these features on competing designs, and grumbled, "why doesn't somebody ..." And now SOG has.

A spear-point gives good penetration, but tends to be vulnerable at the very tip. SOG has engineered around this problem by making the point geometry more obtuse. Like on a Tanto grind, this obtuse tip is stronger, but on the Pentagon Elite it is still symmetrical, and the four-faceted point is meticulously sharpened down to nothing.

The utility of the Elite's ambidextrous thumbstuds are enhanced by the fact the belt clip may be moved to either side of the knife to accommodate us of left-handed persuasion. And the clip is stoutly made of skeletonized stainless spring steel — not plastic — to give



a secure grip and instant release. The wide arc described by the thumbstud makes it a very smooth and easy opener.

The liner-type blade lock is as rigid as any we've tested, and another thoughtful feature is that the liner-lock release button is precisely checkered for a dexterous re-folding of the knife. If you are opening a knife one-handed because the other hand is busy, it follows that the off-hand may be still busy when it's time to secure the 3-7/8" blade and the checkering helps — something not addressed in competing designs, and a practical feature.

The first 1-1/4" of the non-glare, bead-blasted blade is serrated to aid cutting fabric and cordage, and both the serrations and the curved part of the blade kept a good edge, as one would expect from 8A stainless wrought by the skilled makers of Seki. The grips are molded of sharply and precisely checkered Zytel and provide a secure, comfortable grip. A lanyard hole in the butt will pass a length of 550 cord.

At 8-5/8" open and 4-11/16" folded, this strong, well-designed and lightweight knife is a worthy companion, indeed.

SOG Specialty Knives, Dept. SOF, 6521 212th St. S.W., Lynnwood, WA 98036; phone: 425-771-6230; fax: 425-771-7689.

## Portable Potable Water

"Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink," the poet wrote, and although he was talking about seawater the phrase holds true on land as well. Just because it's liquid doesn't mean you should suck it up: You will die without water, but the microbes in much of the world's water supply can kill you just as quickly.

We leave our American Express card at home and never leave home without water, but one eventually has to resupply in the field. There are many viable options to turn available water into potable water, but here is a particularly handy one: the *Survival Straw* distributed by I.W.A.E.

After activation, simply immerse the straw in the water to be purified and suck. A single straw will remove 99.99% of bacteria, giardia and EDB (plus greatly reduce heavy metals and various other chemicals) from up to 5,000 gallons of water if regularly backflushed. If muddy, filter or let settle for maximum unit life. This handy little lifesaver only weighs a couple ounces and will get lost in your pack or pocket, but should be one of the first things you pick up to pack.

Distributed by I.W.A.E. Co., Dept. SOF, 417 Jefferson St., Paducah, KY 42001; phone: 800-360-1569. ☒



# Professional Locksmithing Tools

## LOCKAID

Specifically designed to pick tumbler locks. Designed over thirty years ago to aid law enforcement agencies. Consists of tension wrench, three needles and Lockaid "Gun." Prices include a copy of the book "Lockpicking Simplified."  
 Lockaid \$69.95



## PIX MODEL 13

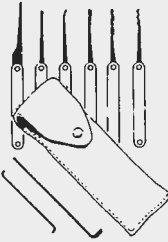
This deluxe yet compact kit features 11 of the most commonly used tools. Comes in a slim cowhide leather case for discreet undercover operatives. As a special bonus, a 5-piece set of warded picks is included. A 16-piece set total. Also included, a copy of "Lockpicking Simplified." Receive all this at a low price of  
 Pix 13 \$42.95



## PXP 8

- Shirt Pocket Size.
- Top Grain Cowhide Leather.
- Has 8 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
- Copy of Lockpicking Simplified.

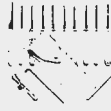
PXP 8 \$24.95



## PXP 10

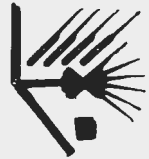
- Shirt Pocket Size.
- Top Grain Cowhide Leather.
- Has 13 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
- Copy of Lockpicking Simplified.

PXP 10 \$34.95



## PIX-EZ All-In-One Pick-Set

100% American Made!  
 As convenient to carry and use as a pocket knife!  
 Only 4 inches long, half inch square, weighs under five ounces, works fast and opens pin and waster tumbler locks quickly, with very little effort. Six tempered spring steel picks, tension wrench.  
 \$34.95



## WKS PICKS

Made of the finest blue tempered spring steel, this 5-piece padlock pick-set is a must in every locksmith's tool box. This set will pick open most every warded padlock made today.  
 \$9.95



## MONTHLY SPECIAL

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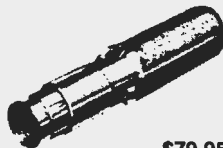
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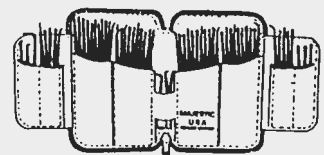
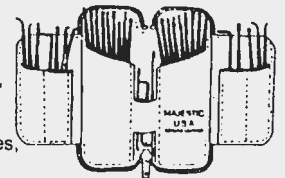


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Text & Photos by Clint Smith

## The Right Moves

Tactics, or the application of tactics, consists of a triad of skills that must be mastered if you plan to win. This triad is as old as warfare itself: shoot, move and communicate. As always, the purpose of shooting is hitting, whether it was with a long-bow or a rifle. Movement may be toward or moving away from the threat. Communication — or usually the lack of communication that results in a lack of knowledge, information or intel — has in the past, and will in the future, change the face of history. Communication can exist between you and the threat (in the form of compliance request) or between personnel on the same team. In a team concept it may come as a warning or serve as input to the direction of movement or a verbal warning of a potential threat.

Selecting one side of the triad, the concept of movement brings up some interesting issues. Plan and train as if no one is standing still. If in three seconds you were going to be shot at and you had no available cover, would you move or stand still? It makes pretty good sense to think you would move. And there is a strong possibility that the threat will move to attack or withdraw. If we were to discuss the physical target to be engaged (a human threat) we know that

**Movement, by both the threat and the shooter, adds infinite variables and realism to training. Has most of your practice been at stationary, or moving, targets? If we believe in the old maxim "We will do in a fight what we have done in training," shouldn't your training include movement?**



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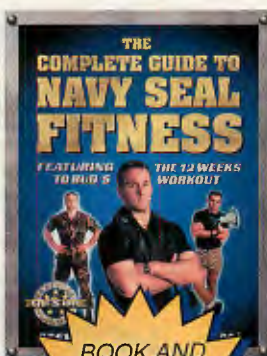
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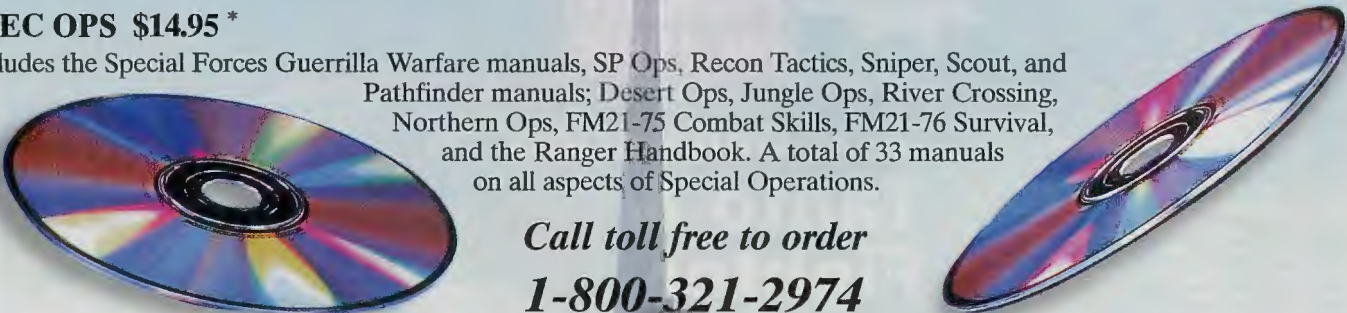
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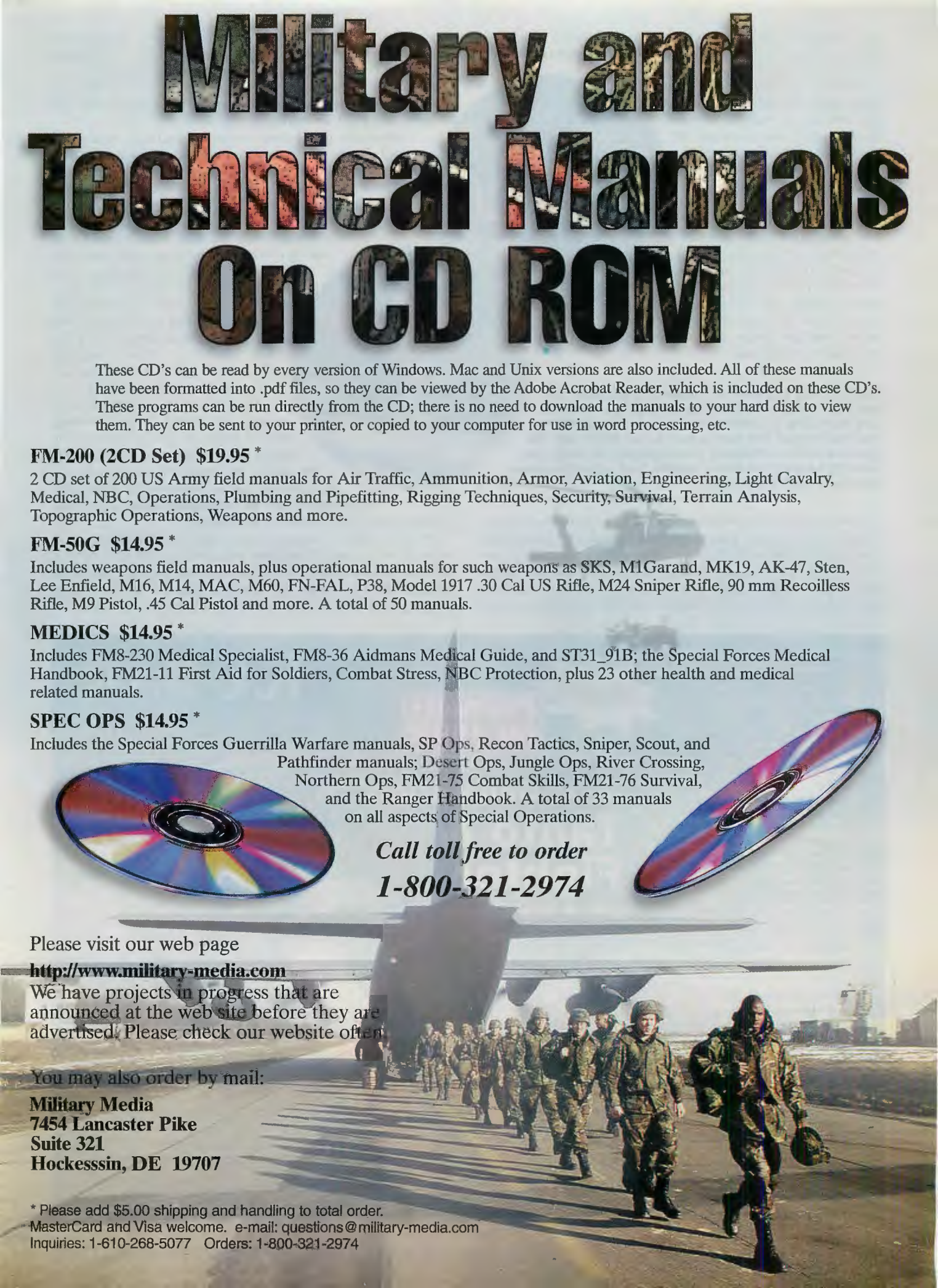
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it is a relatively large target from groin to head. And it may offer a thinner profile if it is in a sideways mode. But, an almost certainty is that the threat will be moving.

Next point: Think of all the rounds of ammunition you have fired in your life. Has most of your practice been at stationary, or moving, targets? If we believe in the old maxim "We will do in a fight what we have done in training," shouldn't your training include movement? Shouldn't you move to cover, or out of the line of possible incoming fire? Do the targets you practice on move, either across your line of march, toward you; away from you? Add to this the truth that many fights include multiple threats and our problem then could become amplified.



The last thing you want to happen in a gunfight is to lose your footing. Lead with the strong foot and set the toes down first to confirm the ground. After confirmation, the heel of the strong foot is set down and the opposite foot is withdrawn to re-establish the firing platform. By keeping the knees slightly bent, a rapid rearward movement can be achieved.

I note while training students here at the school that a stationary student shooting on a stationary target starts to do well grasping the basic principles of sight alignment and sight picture used in conjunction with a good compression of the trigger. Once we start to make the student move and shoot, marksmanship skills deteriorate. After practice, student skills improve and they begin to move and

shoot effectively. Then we throw the next curve ball: We make the student shoot while moving and make the target move too. Student skills again begin to deteriorate as they encounter these new variables. So, the process is like building a house — as skills improve we add another layer, and another, until we get a student who can move, shoot and hit moving threats.

Addressing approaching or withdrawing targets requires no special operator techniques *except* an ability to withdraw from approaching threats and potentially advance on withdrawing threats. Backing up from a threat is not necessarily a reflection of the color of one's backbone. Contrary to popular belief, I would point out that the graveyards are full of people who wouldn't back up. Start with General Custer and go wherever you want from there. We train to withdraw because withdrawing creates distance, which in turn creates time, which could create marksmanship opportunities. Still don't want to back up? Fight a threat armed with a Ka-Bar inside a room sometime. Whatever is left of you, if you survive, *will* back up the next time!

Withdrawal is accomplished by leading with the strong foot and setting the toes of the strong foot down first to confirm the ground. After confirmation, the heel of the strong foot is set down and the opposite foot is withdrawn to re-establish the firing platform. By keeping the knees slightly bent, a rapid rearward movement can be achieved.

In the opposite, advancing-movement marksmanship is an acquired skill gained by practice and repetition. Techniques vary, but what seems to work well for most is keeping the toes pointed in the direction of movement and shoulders square to the threat. Keep a slight flex or bend in the knees and have the feet stay close to the

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ground. Let the feet pass each other (not cross) in a shuffling like action. The flex of the knees in withdrawal and advances reduces the "bouncing" like action that impairs marksmanship.

Lateral moving threats require a "lead" based on the distance of the shooter from the threat. The amount of "lead" is directly related to distance and speed of the threat. You will be required to practice at targets of varying speed and distance to acquire the skill to hit these targets. Another issue with lateral targets that may be more important than distance and speed is follow-through. This is the placement of the sights in the correct place and following through while the hammer falls. Stopping follow-through when the hammer falls is what makes the projectiles strike behind a moving threat, and it is what causes most shooters to miss lateral movers.

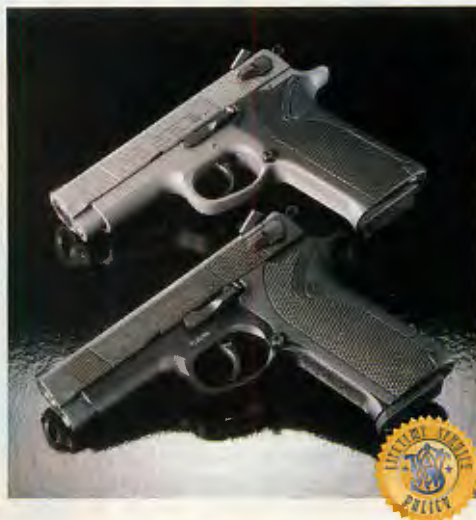
A "wobbling" or "bobbing" target mandates similar concerns. Two techniques can be used. First is tracking, which I believe is the best answer. Get the sights on the target and keep them on the target! When the sights are on the target then press the trigger while tracking (following-through), continue shooting until you get the required response. The second option is the ambush technique. This technique has the shooter place the sights in a stationary position ahead of the threat movement. As the threat approaches the sight area, the shooter "times" the threat arrival with the compression of the trigger. Ambushing the threat means the shooter must have a grasp of projectile flight time and requires the shooter to "hope" the threat doesn't deviate from the direction of movement. In other words, the threat may not "come" to the sights. There you go lucky!

Movement to our advantage can make us less of, or harder to be, acquired in a threat's sight picture. For those who might think "no problem — when I get in a fight I'll just hit that moving sucker, no worry," I am reminded of the old *Victory At Sea* tapes I still watch on occasion. Viewing the footage of Japanese kamikazes working off of the shores of Okinawa and seeing the gunfire directed at those aircraft by naval ships gunners, one wonders how anything could get through the barrage of firepower directed at them. Ask any of the almost 5,000 dead crew of the 30 sunk, or 368 ships damaged how hard it is to hit something that moves.

Movement is a viable part of conflict. Failure to recognize and commit training time to deal with the issue of movement can be fatal. Movement, along with communication and marksmanship, constitutes the triad of winning; it always has been and always will be. ☒

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For more information on these limited edition specialfeature handguns and the location of the Smith & Wesson Stocking Dealer nearest you call 1-800-331-0852, ext. 2904, or visit the Smith & Wesson home page at <http://www.smith-wesson.com>.



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# WORLD SITREP



1

## UNITED STATES

**Base closures:** Defense Secretary Cohen insists two more rounds of base closures must occur in 2001 and 2005 to save \$3 billion for new weapons. Congress, after enduring four rounds of base closures since 1989, has shown little interest in the plan, charging that previous closures were manipulated to hit Republican congressional districts. • **Soldier shortage:** Army short 2,000 needed enlistees for fourth quarter of 1998, well on its way to catching up to Navy in personnel shortage. Air Force, facing enlistment shortage, plans first-ever paid TV ads to combat problem. In all branches, mid-grade personnel are leaving in droves for better paying, less arduous civilian jobs, while record numbers of recruits fail to complete even their first terms of enlistment. First-term dropout rate reached 40% in Army last year. • **Home bases:** Air Force releases names of designated "home bases" of new Air Expeditionary Wings. Ten combat wings will be based at the following Air Force bases: Hill UT, Dyess TX, Elmendorf AK, Lakenheath UK, Davis-Monthan AZ, Shaw SC, Barksdale LA, Ellsworth SC, Cannon NM, and Langley VA. Five others will be set up just for humanitarian missions, including: Pope NC, Travis CA, McConnell KS, Grand Forks ND and Fairchild WA.

2

## RUSSIA

**Oscar winner:** Russian Oscar-class cruise missile submarine spotted observing the NATO Battle Griffin Exercise near Norway. Fighter planes: Government plans to merge MiG and Sukhoi fighter bureaus in order to save money on administration and overhead. Both will continue to design planes independently. Nakhichevan enclave: Azerbaijan asks U.S., France, and Russia to force Armenia to give back Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan fears Armenia is preparing to annex Nakhichevan enclave, a part of Azerbaijan separated from the rest of the country and trapped between Armenia and Turkey.

5

## UGANDA

**Tourist raid:** Kwanan Hutu rebels based in the Democratic Congo cross into Uganda and raid tourist camp at Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park. Rebels pick out 13 "British and American" tourists (including some from New Zealand, Australia and Canada) and march them to Congo border, murdering eight along the way before releasing the rest.

1

6

## CONGO (DRC)

**DRC offensive:** Rebels capture Opala (90 miles south of Kisangani) and advance on Mbuji-Mayi (which is main source of revenue for government). DRC and allies begin offensive at Kindu. DRC forms "mechanized brigade" at Lubumbashi. Zimbabwe sends more troops to DRC. DRC and allies say Uganda and Rwanda wanted to perpetuate war in DRC in order to continue their occupation.

9

## NORTH KOREA

**Help wanted:** U.S. cannot generate enough U-2 flights near North Korea to keep continual watch on its military. Theater commanders want more aircraft, or at least more pilots and mechanics for the planes they have. Air Force sent E8CJSTARS radar plane to track the 12,300 North Korean artillery and rocket systems to be used in the annual winter maneuvers.

10

## SOUTH KOREA

**Ballistic missiles:** Government asks U.S. to help it field medium-range ballistic missile system able to attack key targets inside North Korea. South Koreans think this would be better deterrent to North Korean missiles than expensive and unproven missile defense system.

15

## CHILE

**New fighters:** Government plans to restart program to buy new fighters, which had been derailed by economic issues. Pinochet affair has all but forced Swedish Gryphon out of picture, leaving the F-18C in the lead over the rival F-16C50.

16

## HAITI

**Senator killed:** Gunman kills Senator Jean-Yvon Toussaint, a sharp critic of President Preval. Two boatloads of illegal Haitian immigrants drown when overloaded boats sink en route to Florida. Preval and five opposition factions reach agreement to form caretaker government and hold new elections.

14

## ZAMBIA

**Terrorist bombs:** Five terrorist bombs rock capital of Lusaka, and one damages Angolan embassy. Another 12 bombs found by police and defused or detonated safely. Zambia asks U.S. to send FBI agents to investigate. Government shuts down privately-owned Aero Zambia airline after reports it carried weapons to UNITA rebels in Angola.

3

### CHINA

**Nuke theft (continued):** Reports of U.S. intelligence leaks say China stole designs for W88 nuclear warhead from Los Alamos National Laboratory in mid-'80s, and has continued stealing U.S. nuclear weapons technology from that time. Floodgates opened in 1994, when Clinton Administration ended background checks for foreign scientists visiting three national laboratories. White House advised of problem in 1997, but by all accounts did not take seriously nor raise issue with China to avoid wrecking presidential goal of U.S.-Chinese strategic partnership. Stolen W88 made it possible for China to build multi-warhead and submarine-launched missiles 15 years before they could have done it themselves. Senator Lott says he will consider holding Clinton Administration in contempt of Congress for China policy. Livid Chinese: U.S. vetoes sale of \$450 million Hughes communications satellite to Chinese company linked to Chinese Army, saying sale would harm U.S. national security. Chinese livid with rage, saying veto will damage U.S. ties. More theft: Chinese businessman Yao Yi arrested for trying to illegally buy and export to China fiber optic gyroscopes needed for missile guidance systems. China launches new guided missile destroy ship, the 6,600-ton *Shenzhen*.

4

### SOMALIA

**Gloomiest ever:** United Nations reports between continued fighting, the drought, a food shortage and massive weapons inflow, Somalia is in "its gloomiest period." Warring factions of Rahanwein clan agree to ceasefire in Sakow. Aidid receives shipment of weapons from Libya and another from Eritrea, including several Ferret and DRDM armored vehicles and 106mm recoilless rifles. Rahanwein Resistance Army says Aidid's troops massacred 40 civilians in Baidoa.

7

### SUDAN

**Civil war:** Opposition parties complain that President al-Bashir's hints that he would give up the south in order to end civil war hid his real motives, which they claim are to establish Islamic fundamentalist state the Christian south will never accept. Sudan calls for Arab League to investigate plots against it by Uganda and Eritrea. SPLA rebels kidnap seven Red Cross workers in early March.

8

### GERMANY

**Nuke deadline:** Socialist government, under heavy pressure, gives up plans for firm deadline to stop sending nuclear waste abroad for reprocessing and to shut down nuclear power plants. UN urges Germany to make it easier for refugees to become German citizens.

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### LIBYA

**TWA bomb:** U.S. and Britain give Libya spring deadline to hand over two Lockerbie bombing suspects. Libya rejects deadline saying demands must be met first. Khadafi visits Egypt to discuss Lockerbie situation and other matters with Mubarak. The two say it will take three months to work out details.

13

### JAPAN

**Do (not) drop in:** U.S. suspends plans for parachute training drop on Okinawa after local Japanese object, saying it would amount to expansion of U.S. military activity on the island. All Japanese political parties have agreed to expand the missions of Japanese troops on peacekeeping missions. Japan appears ready to legalize rising of sun flag and the anthem "Thy Reign", praising emperor.

11

### ALGERIA

**Mass grave:** Islamist insurgency continues. Police find mass grave with 70 bodies in abandoned well; the people had been murdered by rebels three years ago.

17

### PANAMA

**Noriega's parole:** U.S. judge reduced General Noriega's sentence for drug trafficking from 40 years to 30, making him eligible for parole in year 2007. Panama, which has already sentenced him to 70 years in prison on various charges, has asked that he be handed over to them when U.S. releases him.

World Sitrep is compiled in part from the biweekly newsletter *For Your Eyes Only: An Open Intelligence Summary of Current Military Affairs*. Published by Tiger Publications (P.O. Box 8759, Dept. SOF, Amarillo, Texas 79114-8759); subscriptions are \$77 per year (26 issues), \$81.80 in Texas. Sample issue available for \$3. Those interested in world intel are encouraged to subscribe.

# SLICK-WILLIE-WATCH

## Fat Boy In Gym

If America's role in the Kosovo conflict seems a bit unplanned and disjointed, remember it's par for the course under the Clinton Administration. Since 1992, Clinton has struggled with foreign policy like the fat kid bumbles through gym class. Perceptions about Clinton's inability to direct foreign policy are confirmed in the must-read book *All Too Human*, by former White House Communications Director and Clinton right-hand-man George Stephanopoulos.

The 456-page book, available at any bookstore, gives a brutally honest, detailed, behind-the-scenes look at the Clinton presidency, in which foreign policy is clearly an afterthought. Although Stephanopoulos maintains a respectful tone toward his former boss, the facts point to a commander-in-chief with little ability to understand the complexity of serious conflicts in Iran, Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti — compounded by the fact that Clinton is directed by no clear personal philosophy about America's military role abroad.

As he became confused about his responsibility to deal with foreign human rights atrocities in 1994, the United States began to resemble a powerless giant. Frustrated by Clinton's lack of vision,

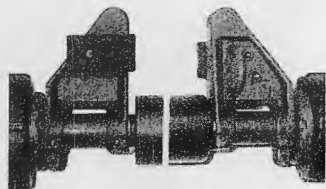
Stephanopoulos found himself taking advice from veteran *New York Times* reporter Johnny Apple. As the two shuttled to a campaign event for then-New York City Mayor David Dinkins, Apple politely told Stephanopoulos he and the president needed to read *Present at the Creation*, by former Secretary of State Dean Acheson — a classic account of post-WWII American diplomacy. Stephanopoulos was open to any suggestions, because Clinton clearly lacked the skills needed to make decisions about increasingly complex situations. When Clinton found Stephanopoulos reading the book, he said, "We'll work this out, George."

"Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti — foreign policy was a mess," Stephanopoulos writes. "In each case, we were caught between critics who said we should use American power for humanitarian purposes and those who insisted that 'we can't be the world's policeman,' so we shouldn't even try." Clinton apparently fell somewhere in between.

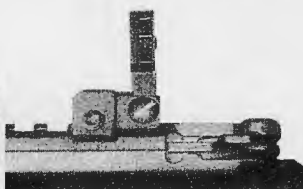
His liberal base wasn't much help. Instead, it was confusing. In the decades Clinton spent preparing himself to be president, liberals stood firmly against involvement of the U.S. military in places such

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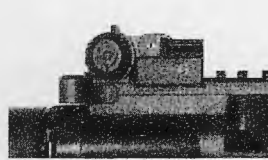
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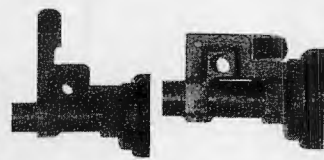
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as Vietnam, Grenada and Libya. Throughout Clinton's life, modern liberals had opposed neutralizing enemies in defense of America's vital interests. Yet Clinton found himself faced with pressure by the same group — which got him elected — to engage aggressively in conflicts he didn't understand.

"In private," Stephanopoulos writes, "he railed against liberal critics, like *Times* columnist Anthony Lewis, who were making his life miserable by pushing him to send troops to Bosnia and Haiti: 'Lewis has to accept the fact that he's been against every American intervention for 30 years, and now he's the biggest hawk in the world.' Sometimes he just exploded in frustration: 'What would they have me do? What the fuck would they have me do?'"

Stephanopoulos describes a scene in which Clinton screamed in frustration about his screwed-up foreign policy team, demanding that former Reagan aide David Gergen be included in future foreign policy decisions. He quotes Clinton saying, "The Reagan people were much better at the politics of foreign policy than we are. Look at Lebanon. They went into Grenada two days later and fixed it."

The book also gives detailed accounts of Clinton's pathetic attempt to force the military to accept gays, almost overnight. Clinton's handling of the situation, Stephanopoulos writes, backfired and caused more trouble than ever for gays and lesbians in America's armed forces. The whole debacle, he explains, threatened a full separation between the military and its commander-in-chief.

The book waxes extensively about Clinton's relationship with Gen. Colin Powell, who served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the first term. Clinton and Stephanopoulos both respected Powell, but were obsessed with the prospect of facing a challenge from the general in the 1996 election. That fear, Stephanopoulos writes, created a barrier between Clinton and the man who arguably knows war strategy and foreign policy as well as anyone alive.

The book even addresses an old *SOF* favorite, which is Clinton's inability to salute properly. Turns out, the Clinton administration is so lacking in military veterans it was a struggle just to figure out

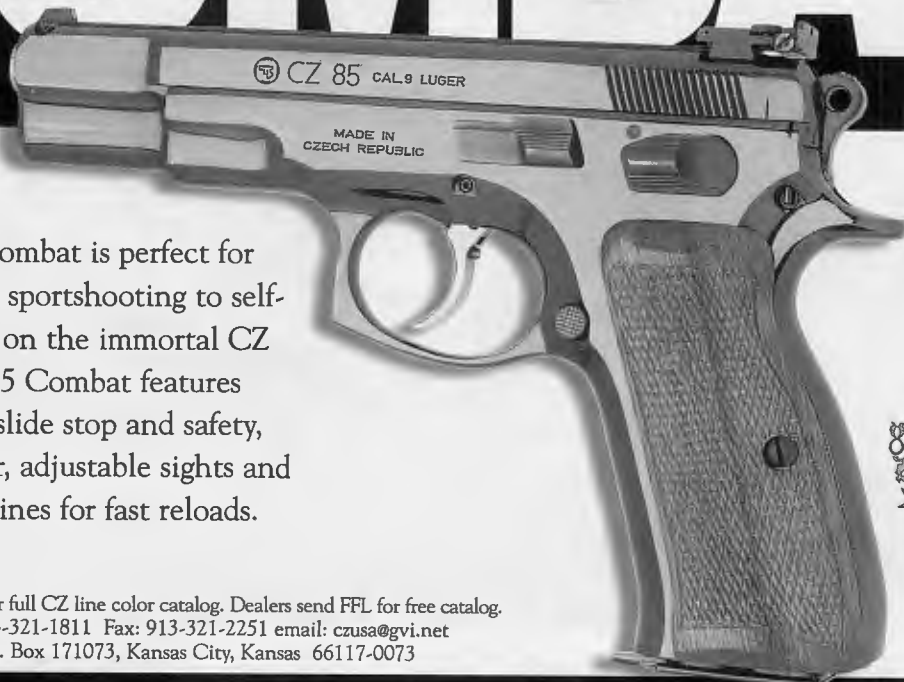


how to correct the problem.

"Sheepish at first, he seemed to be working out his internal conflicts every time he tentatively raised his hand," Stephanopoulos writes. "The tips of his fingers would furtively touch his slightly bowed head, as if he were being caught at something he wasn't supposed to do. The snickering got so bad that National Security Adviser Tony Lake came to my office one afternoon to strategize on how to approach the president about it. The message had to be delivered in private, but who was the right messenger? Not me; I was too young, and not a veteran. The vice president was out; too much competitive tension in their relationship for something so personal. It had to be Tony; though he hadn't served in the military, he had served in Vietnam as a foreign service officer, and Clinton's salute came under the heading of national security."

All of which explains why the following one-liner, overheard by *SOF*, is somewhat funny: "Rumor has it Clinton spent more time planning his Woodstock trip than his war in Kosovo." All humor, sayeth the wise man, is founded in truth. ✕

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# I Was There

Text & Photos by David Bray

## Whiplash

**It** was January 1966. Directly west of the city of Pleiku, the 1/9th Cavalry Scouts found themselves supporting units that were working the Cambodian border; searching out supply depots used by the 32nd, 33rd and 66th NVA regiments that we had fought so hard in the Ia Drang Valley during October and November of 1965.

Places that had been tiny 'Yard villages were now storehouses for rice, munitions and petroleum products. The Montagnard residents were gone, possibly killed by the North Vietnamese, whose on-site troop contingent was limited to caretaking forces left behind when the regiments had moved across the border into the sanctuary of Cambodia.

The troopers worked a strip of land about 4 miles wide, which included territory on both sides of the border. Scout choppers would screen the area for the troops, conduct ambushes and hunt down and kill those enemy soldiers who would be found hiding in a well or spider hole.

The Cav would enter a "village" of three to six huts, confirm it was a supply depot and torch it. As rice burned, it gave off a yellowish smoke. Ammunition-filled huts would explode and those that contained petrol belched heavy black smoke that seemed out of place along the jungle trails.

Sometimes, when there was time and opportunity, the Scouts would search out and destroy the supply points. On our first pass we'd flame the hootches with rockets. Then M-34 "Willy Pete" white phosphorous grenades would be dropped upon the thatched roofs. Sometimes they'd go through and start a fire but oftentimes they'd bounce right off forcing us to land and wait while one of our guys ran to the structure and knocked holes in the wall. Then he'd toss an M-34 and run like hell — usually with trails of white phosphorous shooting over his head.

There was artillery in place to support patrols on the legal side (Vietnam) of the border. One day we touched down at an arty position to take a break and chow down on some Cs. A sad-eyed major

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gave me a bottle of insect repellent to keep the damned mosquitoes off. Since we were working close-by, we came again the next day and I sought out the major. I found only his steel pot with no rips in it — only a huge groove down the right side, exactly the diameter of a 105 round. He'd received bad news from home and had walked purposely in front of a tube — just as it fired. My Cs didn't taste so good that day.

When we thought most of the supply depots had been located and reduced, most of the Cavalrymen were pulled out; but a few units stayed behind to patrol in hopes of catching Charlie coming across the border.

We screened the AO for one unit, bivouacked right on the border. The LZ would accommodate six slicks at a time touching down — but the perimeter was a solid wall of vegetation that a tiger would have a hard time moving in, let alone soldiers with full rucks. Only one place nearby was semi-clear, just directly northwest of the LZ, but even that was covered with 3-foot-high grass, small trees and shrubs.

Passing over that area, I saw a small tree suddenly move as if hit by something. I turned back and saw a dazed khaki-clad VC who had run into it and had his bell rung. Aware that I spotted him, he ran for the open and dove face down into the grass. As he assumed the prone and hid his eyes, I could see he had no weapon and thought he might be playing bait, trying to draw us into an ambush.

A couple of low slow circles convinced me he was alone. I told Mike Scofield, my observer, to ready a WP grenade. Dropping it by the Charlie from 15 feet overhead we watched as the grass — then the man — begin to burn. He never moved or screamed.

We headed for Pleiku.

As I flew east, I looked out Mike's side of the chopper. Outlined in the afternoon sun were several large animals in the branches of a big tree a few hundred yards away. "Mike, look! Gorillas!" I said as I turned the chopper. In less than a minute we were next to the tree and the "gorillas" turned out to be a squad of grunts from the LZ who had heard us pass overhead. By mime, since we had no radio contact, they let me know they were lost.

photos: author's files



(top) A "Hook" brings home a WIA H-13, 3,000 feet in the air over South Vietnam. (above) Dave Bray with his Bell H-13 Sioux.

It took over 30 minutes to lead them from the tree, through the terrible sea of plant life, the 200 feet back to the perimeter of the LZ.

The next day my team had been called to pinpoint the location of a platoon-sized patrol that had been hacking its way through the jungle. I had no idea how long they had been out, but my knowledge of the area made me thankful that I was not humping a pack with them.

We made radio contact and soon I was directly over a stand of trees that hid them below me. As they started blowing trees with liberal charges of C-4, I climbed to 300 feet and called for a Chinook to rendezvous with us. Inside the 'hook carried a rolled up "Wonder Woman" ladder made of cable and aluminum crossbars. Within minutes we could see a speck in the sky at 4,000 feet and knew it was the 'hook headed our way. I climbed to 500 feet, so they could home in on my position.

With careful placing of the charges the grunts felled the trees in such a way that they overlapped each other, creating a platform about 15 feet above the jungle floor. By climbing up successive layers of 3- to 4-foot-diameter tree trunks, the grunts were soon in position to reach the

*Continued*

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ladder that was now dangled from the rear ramp of the big bird.

Following all that humping and hacking at "stay-awhile" vines (they'd snag you as if to say, "Hey, stay awhile."), they had to climb nearly 100 feet up against a downdraft of 130 miles an hour; winds of more than hurricane force to be faced with weapons and full packs after hours of fighting their way through the jungle.

Two men grabbed the end of the ladder and held it steady as the chopper came to a stabilized hover far overhead. Above the trees — but below the cargo aircraft — I flew around and watched as the Captain and his radio operator started up the ladder. They were followed by the others, two men at a time, side by side.

When the Captain reached the ramp he quickly doffed his pack and laid down on the deck, leaning out over the ladder, helping each of his men make that final lurch into the big green machine. They must have been in great shape because they all made it up without problems except for the last two men — the two who had held the ladder.

Now, with no one to steady it, they started to climb — and the ladder began to swing. The downdraft whipped them around so strongly I expected them to be blown off. However, they battled their way to the half-way point when one of them, totally exhausted, could go no farther and simply hung in limbo like a limp dish rag.

Seeing this, the Captain motioned wildly for the other man to haul ass on up. Even as he spoke, he swung himself over the ramp and inched down the wildly swinging ladder until he was alongside the stranded trooper. Awed, I watched him talk calmly to the man as he took the man's ruck and weapon from him and secured them to the ladder.

As he worked, the automatic stabilizing system that held the hook steady, seemed to give way and the chopper backed up — and jolted the foot of the ladder into the tops of standing trees leaving the two men hanging precariously.

Quickly, the brave CO swung his legs around the man and locked his knees around the ladder rung. He grabbed the cables on either side of the trooper and twisted his arms around them for a better grip. I was so close that I could read his lips as he shouted upward to the sweating crew chief who was watching him from above. "Up, up, up!" the Captain shouted. I saw the crew chief scream into his headset and suddenly the Chinook jerked upward, and yanked the ladder out of the tree top, simultaneously whipping the stranded duo around like rag dolls in the mouth of a vicious dog. The Captain, though, maintained his grip and the ladder slowly ceased gyrating as the huge chopper lumbered to 4,000 feet and sped towards Pleiku at 120 knots.

As I watched the bird disappear, I knew the trooper might die that day — but only if his CO died first.

*David Bray resides in eastern Arkansas. ✉*

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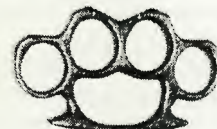
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# TERRORISM 101

## Today's Top Guns Of Terror

### PART II

by Richard L. Sherrow

*It's time for continent-hopping in our continuing terrorism tour. Although not all-inclusive, our global travels highlight those who were, those who are, and of course ... those who may come back. The old saying, "What goes around, comes around" may become uncomfortably foreboding.*

### North America

Canada: Vast frozen expanses, smiling, red-jacketed Mounties in Smoky Bear hats, and peaceful, fur-coated, hockey-playing folks who say "ay" a lot come to mind. Thoughts of Canada and terrorism just seem incongruous. Is that changing?

Although never a hotbed of terrorist

activity, Canada has had its share. The last major incident was the June 1985 bombing of Air India Flight 182 from Toronto to London. All 329 passengers and crew died as the 747 was blasted apart off the Irish coast. Perhaps more important than what terrorists have done *in Canada*, is what they may well be planning to do, *from* the great white north.

Over the years, sizable quantities of explosives, commercially manufactured in Canada, have shown up in terrorist bombs around the world, including a large lot of "factory reject" detonators found with Middle Eastern terrorist groups.

Canada's permissive Immigration Act, coupled with its benefit-laden Citizenship Act has, for some time, been attracting the wrong crowd. Dozens of the world's major terror groups have set up shop in Canada,

including Hamas, Hezbollah, Tamil Tigers (LTTE), the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) and the Kurdish PKK. According to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), these groups are actively engaging in, among other things:

- Setting up and operating international terrorist safe houses.
- Providing logistical support for terrorist actions outside Canada. (The 3,000-plus-mile, mostly unguarded U.S./Canada border opens many possibilities)
- Raising funds and recruiting new members from Canada's growing immigrant population.
- Arranging member and support transportation to and from other countries.

Despite this growing international threat potential, the Canadian government has



# TERRORISM 101

elected to slash the personnel resources and operating budget of the very organization tasked with keeping an eye on internal security. In the periods 1993/1994 and 1998/1999, the CSIS suffered a 21% budget cut in both of these areas. This translated into losing \$22.7 million Canadian dollars (U.S. \$15.1 million) and 760 personnel.

## United States

Is hyped fear of terrorism overshadowing actual threat? So far, absolutely! (Subject to change without notice ... ) Is the realization there are fast bucks to be made by pandering to this fear spawning a new growth industry? You betcha.

Contrary to the whining handwringers of the knee-jerk, overreaction crowd (i.e. Charlie "ban-it-all" Schumer, Dianne Feinstein, the Southern (no)Poverty Law Center, and mainstream media) we are not awash in rampant domestic terrorism. In fact, we are actually near the bottom of world charts.

Despite the facts, "knee-jerk" is succeeding in ravaging the nation in ways that would make Osama bin Laden and Carlos green with envy. School kids who make the politically incorrect choice of building non-functioning model rockets for show-and-tell are being expelled from school and branded terrorists.

In the old days, when kids broke open thermometers and played with the mercury, it was considered life. Today that same act is treated as a major environmental disaster, causing entire schools or neighborhoods to be evacuated and shut down for days (accompanied by massive "clean-up" costs). God forbid someone threatened to

spill nerve agent or anthrax. Absolute bedlam. And the real terrorists are studying our (over)reactions with great interest.

America's actual terrorist acts, the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings, as appalling as they were, are aberrations. The continuing damage occurs when self-serving media types over-hype — and even invent — situations to multiply the panic, while politicians stumble over themselves to be first to propose Constitution-ripping, feel-good legislation.

## Mexico

As a country where private firearms ownership frightens the hell out of government, Mexico has had little in the way of hardcore terrorist activity. What groups have risen over the years have generally found themselves violently suppressed, either by government troops, or "private" army/police/mercenary forces hired by wealthy landowners or the federal government. While it's debatable whether they really deserve a terrorist label, the two main actors currently on stage are:

### • Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR):

Waving a green flag decorated with crossed hammer, machete and AK47 over a red star, the EPR hit the streets on 28 June 1996, one year after Guerrero State Judicial Police machine-gunned 17 *campesinos* in Aguas Blancas.

Operating mainly in the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Puebla and the Federal Judicial District, the EPR appears the most violent of "revolutionary" groups operating in Mexico. Just how much a threat they pose depends on who's evaluating. While confining their targets to the police and mil-

itary, the EPR has no qualms about staging their shootouts in areas frequented by Yankee tourists — hoping that scared *turistas* don't stick around and spend government-supporting dollars.

Although President Zedillo's administration publicly dismisses the EPR as pathetic bandits, it takes them seriously enough to dispatch armored convoys into the countryside, put armed forces and Federal Judicial Police (*Federales*) on nationwide alert ... and order a fleet of U.S.-made NABCO bomb containment trailers.

• **Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN):** Long on PR and short on real violence, the EZLN is actually more an emerging political party than terrorist organization. Named for hero of the Mexican Revolution, Emiliano Zapata, the EZLN is best known for its enigmatic leader, Rafael Sebastin Guillen Vicente, aka Subcomandante Marcos. With trademark ski mask and pipe, Marcos champions the plight of indigenous Indians, while bitching about NAFTA and Yankee, as well as Chinese, business influences on Mexican government. Although there were several armed clashes with police and military, these have died down.

Unlike almost all other Latin American terrorist/guerrilla groups, indications are that neither the EPR nor EZLN has stooped to drug dealing. Could it be just too much competition from the government?

## Latin America/ South America

Long a hotbed of terrorist/revolutionary/guerrilla activity, this part of the world has been indelibly stamped with images of that icon of Marxist revolution, Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Long-dead in the steamy jungles of Bolivia, his spirit mystically survives to enthral new generations of revolutionaries.

For instance, Colombia: If ever there were a country where government leaders daily wake up, shake their heads, and mutter, "What am I doing here?" it would be Colombia.

Playing a poor second fiddle to drug cartels and communist terrorists/revolutionaries, the Colombian government is hard put to stay afloat. The main players on Colombia's bloody stage are:

• **Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC):** Arguably the largest, best-equipped, best-trained guerrilla force in South America, the pro-Soviet, pro-Cuban, anti-American FARC is the muscle of the

(opposite) What goes around, comes around: The National Hotel in Havana's Central Vedado District was bombed by anti-Castro terrorists in July 1997. (below) Also bombed a month later by anti-Castro terrorists was the famous Copacabana Hotel in Havana's Miramar District. (inset) Cuban Army now patrols area.



photos: author

# TERRORISM 101

Communist Party of Colombia (PCC). Boasting between 5,000-7,000 hardcore members, and uncounted support cadre, FARC is strongly tied to Colombia's drug cartels, drug trafficking, kidnapping, extortion and murder — most recently killing three Americans.

## Peru

• **Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path):** Truly junkyard dogs, these are some of the most unpredictable and vicious players in world-terrorist circles. With roots in the Peruvian government expansion era of the late 1960s, this offshoot of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) began actual terrorist operations in 1980, since being held responsible for *more than* 10,000 deaths.

A bizarre mix of Maoist-Marxist-Leninist ideology, blended with traditional Quechua Indian beliefs, the goal of Sendero Luminoso has been to generate an armed peasant revolt to overthrow the constitutional Peruvian government and replace it with a leftist ethnic-Indian state — by the turn of the century.

Rabidly “anti-imperialist,” the xenophobic SL generally hates everybody. Able to conduct simultaneous urban and rural terrorist attacks, the SL has wreaked havoc across Peru with kidnappings, assassinations, arson, bombings and mutilations directed against nearly everybody.

Unlike other Latin terror groups, SL doesn't have a record of accepting support from Cuba, relying instead on drug trafficking, robbery and imposition of “war taxes” on civilians. So great has been their impact that in 1991 Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori suspended the constitution, empowering the government with emergency rule. However, like an increasing number of terrorist bands, SL has its own internet website at

(where else?) The People's Republic of Berkeley (California).

An equal opportunity terror organization, some of SL's hits include:

- August 1981: In a busy month in Lima, SL bombed the U.S. Embassy, Coca Cola, Bank of America, and a Carnation Dairy subsidiary.

- May 1983: Blacked-out Lima in a bomb attack that dropped 10 power pylons, and in the confusion set off 30 more bombs, causing \$27 million in damage.

- February 1986: Killed the Chupac vilage mayor, stole food stored in a church and threatened to shoot the priest.

- July 1986: Bombed the Soviet Embassy in Lima.

- April 1987: Shot-up the North Korean Commercial Mission in Lima.

- **Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA):** Adherents to a Che Guevara-style, Marxist-Leninist ideology, MRTA entered the terrorism stage in 1983. In 1986, they merged with another like-minded Peruvian group, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR). Unlike Sendero Luminoso, MRTA had no problem taking aid from Cuba and the former Nicaraguan Sandinistas.

Strongly anti-American, MRTA has launched numerous attacks against everything Yankee from the U.S. Embassy to Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets. MRTA gained international attention on 17 December 1996, when 14 members of their Edgar Sanchez Commando unit seized the Japanese Embassy in Lima, taking numerous diplomatic hostages. On 22 April 1997, after a 126-day standoff, government forces stormed the embassy. During the attack, one hostage and two soldiers were killed. Of the 14 hostage-takers, all were either killed during the raid or summarily executed on the spot. Although this was a major setback, MRTA is still alive and well.

## Cuba

For many years, Cuba was considered a shining star of state-sponsored terrorism. With a pocket full of Soviet arms and money, the Castro regime exported socialist revolution around the globe. Whether providing training and safe haven in Cuba or dropping his troops into the hot spots of the world, Fidel was in the thick of it. The collapse of the Soviet Union, coupled with a choking embargo, have brought all that to a grinding halt.

What goes around, however, tends to come around. For Castro, the burr under his saddle has been the many Cuban exile groups, mainly based in the United States.

Losing face — and lives — in the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco, exiles have dedicated themselves over the past few decades to ruining Castro's day with their own brand of terrorism. The latest alleged effort was a series of resort hotel bombings in Havana. From July to August 1997, five hotels and a restaurant were bombed; the Copacabana bombing killing an Italian tourist. In March 1999, Salvadoran citizen, Ernesto Cruz Leon, was convicted of the bombings and sentenced to a firing squad.

## Europe

Mention European terrorism and most people think of the IRA. Most non-Europeans outside law-enforcement or military circles are largely ignorant of Europe's violent terrorist history.

Given the current state of world affairs, particularly Bill Clinton and “Muddling” Albright's totally inept foreign policies, we at *SOF* feel that it would behoove the world, and especially the United States, to reexamine these groups, their history, ideology, alliances and potential for reemergence. Although most are dormant, and many of their leaders dead or in jail, the movements



photos: author's files



Before and after photos of August 1986 explosion of a large pipe bomb planted by FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). Three Colombian EOD technicians were killed in the blast.

aren't dead and buried.

• **Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA):** Operating from Basque provinces of Spain and France, *Euzkadi ta Askatasuna* has, for 40 years, waged a relentless bombing campaign against Spanish government and Spanish interests. In response to French moves against it, ETA has also zeroed in on French targets.

ETA's international terrorist connections are extensive. Their close ties to such groups as PIRA and the RAF (Red Army Faction) provide cross-training, weapons, explosives and safe houses. Although not quite avowed Marxists, ETA has gleaned support, training and safe haven in Libya, Lebanon, Cuba, and actually fought for Nicaraguan Sandinistas. To date, nearly 900 people have died in ETA attacks.

• **Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA):** Formed in the 1969 split of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Marxist-oriented PIRA has been responsible for the majority of violence in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In addition, the PIRA has a long history of interaction and support to other terrorist groups, including the Red Army Faction and ETA. In addition to fundraising in the United States, the PIRA has received much financial support, training, weapons and explosives from Libya and the former Soviet Union.

• **Red Army Faction (RAF):** Originally known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang, the Marxist-Leninist RAF had its beginnings in the West German student antiwar movement of the 1960s. Dedicated to destroying NATO and "Western capitalism," the RAF began its sporadic terror campaign in the early 1970s. They often collaborated with other terror groups such as Action Direct (France), the Communist Combatant Cells (Belgium), Red Brigades (Italy), and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). In addition to receiving arms and support from Cuba and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), many of its members actually trained in Cuba and in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

Although the RAF suffered setbacks with the arrest and subsequent jailhouse "suicides" of some of its leaders (Ulrike Meinhof in May 1976, Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin in October 1977), the group continued its destructive reign. Among its many attacks against U.S. targets have been:

- May 1972: Bombing the Officer's Club in Frankfurt, West Germany, with one person killed and 13 wounded.
- June 1974: Raid on U.S. Army ammunition depot in Mesau, West Germany, where several cases of M-26 fragmentation grenades were stolen. Three months later, Carlos the Jackal used two of them to attack a Paris drugstore.
- June 1979: Detonated a large remote-



Generic pipe bomb — favorite of the terrorist because if he can say "pipe bomb" he has the technology to build one — gives this devastating fragmentation when filled with C-4 plastic explosive.



Emblem of the FPL (Farabundo Marti Popular Liberation Forces), an umbrella group of the FMLN (Farabundo Marti Liberation Front), Marxist-Leninist groups active in El Salvador in the 1980s and 1990s. Their terrorist efforts used improvised explosives devices or military stores supplied by communist mentors — whichever they happened to have.

controlled bomb under a bridge in Obourg, Belgium, narrowly missing the staff car containing NATO commander, U.S. Army General Alexander Haig.

- August 1981: Bombed U.S.A.F. headquarters in Ramstein, West Germany, injuring 18 Americans and two Germans.
- September 1981: Fired two Soviet PG-7 rocket-propelled grenades into the armored Mercedes of U.S. Army Europe commander, Gen. Frederick J. Kroesen, slightly injuring the general and his wife.
- December 1984: At 0800 hours of 18 December, a man in a U.S. Marine uniform parked an Audi 80 on the grounds of the NATO school in Oberammergau, West Germany. Suspicion was raised when he failed to salute an officer as he hurriedly exited the gate. After a series of snafus delayed the EOD team, the car was entered

at 1400 hours. In the trunk were 26 kilos of commercial dynamite wired into detonating cord, detonators, batteries, a timer and several pounds of fragment-producing nuts and bolts. The explosives were part of 900 kilos of commercial explosives and 700 meters of detonating cord stolen the previous June in Ecaussines, Belgium. The bomb was set to go off at 0920 hours, but the battery amperage was too low to explode the detonators.

• August 1985: Near midnight on 7 August, a young U.S. Army specialist left a Wiesbaden disco with a *fraulein* he had been romancing that evening. His body was later discovered with a point-blank bullet wound in the back of the head. Early the next morning an RAF member driving a 1976 Volkswagen Passat with counterfeit U.S. plates flashed the dead GI's military I.D. card to gain admittance to the U.S. Rhein-Main Air Base. Hidden in the VW was a 20x20x26-centimeter steel box packed with an improvised sodium-chlorate explosive, surrounded by numerous 2.8-kilo camping-gas cylinders and a special 10-kilo gas cylinder as used by the German Federal Railway — plus a large quantity of specialized railroad-type nuts and bolts, added for fragmentation effect. At 0719 hours, the car, parked next to the headquarters of Air Traffic Command, erupted in an earth-shattering blast of flame and frag. One American serviceman and a female dependent were killed, 11 were injured, and 30 cars and several buildings were damaged.

Fairly quiet for several years, the RAF, often deemed to be out of business, came out of retirement during the Gulf War with automatic weapons fire on the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, and again in 1993 with the bombing of a German prison. One year ago, the RAF allegedly issued a press release claiming that they were hanging up their hand grenades and slipping off into the sunset of retirement. I wouldn't break out the champagne.

Will NATO actions in Kosovo cause a reemergence of the RAF or other groups? If so, what can we expect? In 1975 NATO security forces went on high alert when it was reported that the RAF had stolen 70 liters of French mustard agent. It was never recovered. Then assigned to the U.S. Army's 3rd EOD detachment in Augsburg, Germany, I remember well our pucker factors rising as we broke out chemical protective gear and stocked up on emergency supplies of decontaminants. Further, a 1989 raid on one of its hideouts found evidence the group was attempting to culture botulism toxin.

• **Red Brigades (BR):** Formed in 1970, the *Brigate Rosse* is dedicated to a communist overthrow of Italian government, destruction of "imperialist multinational corporations," and the ousting of NATO. In 1984 the BR split into two factions. The

larger, Fighting Communist Party (PCC), leans toward the Leninist view that only violent terrorist acts can bring about revolutionary change. The other faction, the Union of Fighting Communists (UCC), feels that revolution isn't possible until the proletariat is ready to support it.

Leaning heavily toward kidnapping and assassination, two of the BR's better known operations include:

- **March 1978:** On 16 March, BR terrorists killed four bodyguards and a chauffeur while kidnapping Italian Christian Democratic Party President Aldo Moro. Fifty-five days later Moro was murdered with an 11-round burst from a Czech M61 Skorpion machine pistol. The gun was part of an arms delivery from Palestinian terrorists.

- **December 1981:** Posing as plumbers, two BR members rang the doorbell of the Verona, Italy, apartment of U.S. Army Brigadier General James L. Dozier and his wife. Ignoring all the warning signs, Dozier admitted them into his apartment. He was pistol-whipped, handcuffed, blindfolded, gagged and stuffed into a shipping crate. For the next 42 days Dozier was held in a small apartment in Padua, Italy, until rescued in a daring precision raid by the elite Italian *Nucleo Operativo Centrale di Sicurezza* (NOCS).



author's files

As technology comes to terrorism, the threat increases for chemical, biological — even nuclear — terrorist action. In 1975, author (right) trains joint U.S. Army/German fire services class on CBR terrorism.

## Asia

The world's largest continent fairly abounds with unsavory animals of the two-legged variety.

- **Aum Shinrikyo (Supreme Truth):** Founded in 1987, the lofty ambitions of this Japanese religious cult were truly stellar:

Take over Japan, then the world. Capturing global attention with its half-assed 1995 Sarin nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subway system, the cult boasts as many as 40,000 members worldwide, even in Russia.

The 1995 incident drove news media into an absolute feeding frenzy. Not knowing Sarin from sushi, they hyped the attack as the beginning of the end. In fact, considering an almost complete lack of understanding of chemical agent dispersal properties, coupled with less-than-purified agent, it's no surprise that so few were actually killed.

- **Japanese Red Army (JRA):** Breaking away from the Japanese Communist Party-Red Army Faction in 1971, Fusako Shigenobu proved just how deadly the female of the species can be when she formed the brutal Maoist-Marxist-Leninist JRA. Operating worldwide, the JRA formed a tight relationship with George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The extremely violent and cold-blooded history of the JRA includes:

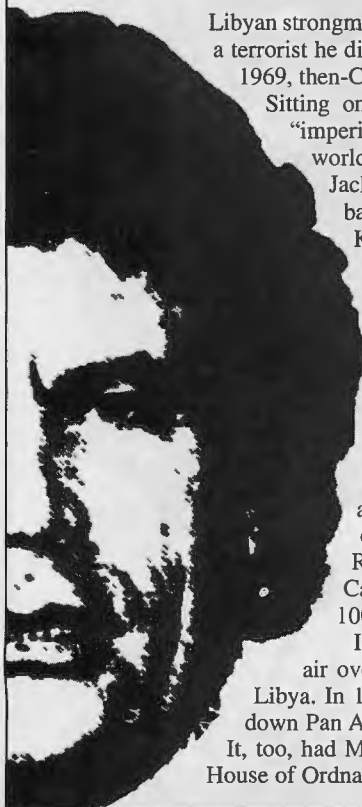
- **May 1972:** Under the direction of the infamous "Carlos," three JRA terrorists carried out a machine gun and grenade attack on Israel's Lod Airport, killed 26 people on a Holy Land pilgrimage.

- **August 1975:** Seized the U.S. Consulate in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, taking 52 hostages. Threatening to blow up the building and kill the hostages, they demanded the release of seven JRA prisoners in Japan. The released prisoners were flown to Tripoli, Libya.

- **April 1988:** One year after the U.S. raid on Libya, JRA bombed the American USO club in Naples, Italy, killing five people, including one U.S. servicewoman. At the same time, in what was believed to be a coinciding attack on U.S. soil, JRA member Yu Kikumura was arrested on the New Jersey Turnpike in possession of three pipe bombs. Sentenced to 30 years in the maximum federal prison at Florence, Colorado, Kikumura has been joined by World Trade Center bomber, Eyad Ismoil, Oklahoma City bombers Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, and the Unabomber.

- **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE):** The largest and most powerful Tamil group in Sri Lanka, the LTTE's stated goal is a separate Tamil state in the northeastern provinces. To achieve this goal, the group has carried out a long and bloody campaign of bombings and assassinations, to date resulting in hundreds of deaths. Formed in the early 1970s, the LTTE began its terror reign in July 1983 with the ambush-killing of 13 soldiers. This event resulted in island-wide ethnic rioting and paved the way to ever-increas-

## Godfather Of International Terrorism



Libyan strongman-dictator, Colonel Muammar al-Khadaffi, never met a terrorist he didn't like. At least as long as it suited his purposes. In 1969, then-Captain Khadaffi led a coup overthrowing King Idris I. Sitting on billions in oil money with an intense hatred for "imperialist powers," it took no time for the terrorists of the world to come calling. From Abu Nidal to Carlos the Jackal, most all found a generous benefactor willing to bankroll most any violent endeavor, as long as it upset Khadaffi's perceived enemy's apple cart.

Providing funding, arms, logistical support and safe havens, as well as opening numerous terrorist training camps in the Libyan desert, Khadaffi welcomed one and all. His guest list looked like an alphabet soup of world terror groups, including the PIRA, ETA, RAF and JRA. They came from South America, Europe, Asia and Africa, murderers all.

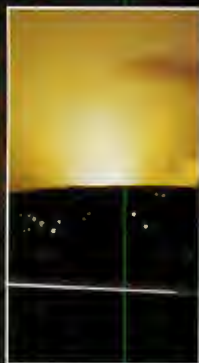
In April 1986, a terrorist bomb destroyed the La Belle Disco in West Berlin, killing two American GIs, a Turkish female and wounding 230 others. Within days the finger pointed back to Khadaffi. President Ronald Reagan ordered up "Operation El Dorado Canyon," the bombing of Tripoli, Libya. Khadaffi and 100 others were wounded, and his infant daughter killed.

In December 1988, Pan Am 103 was blown out of the air over Lockerbie, Scotland. Again the fingers pointed at Libya. In 1986, a bomb timer, identical to the one that brought down Pan Am 103, was recovered by the author in Togo, Africa. It, too, had Muammar's fingerprints all over it (see "International House of Ordnance," *SOF*, Jan '88).

— R.S.

Continued on page 70





A volley of cruise missiles slams into Yugoslavian military complex just outside the capital of Belgrade.

# Let The Bombs Begin...

**SOF Behind The Lines  
... And Behind Bars**

**Text & Photos By  
Mark H. Milstein**

**Y**UGOSLAVIA — It was Thursday night, 2 April, and as NATO-launched smart weapons could clearly be heard sending the second major bridge across the River Danube crumpling into the water, three Yugoslavian interior ministry (MUP) policemen were busy kicking and spitting on my prostrate body in a cold, dark jail cell.

Less than eight hours before, I had been arrested, interrogated and beaten for the crime of stumbling upon a police checkpoint on the edge of Novi Sad, Yugoslavia's second largest city, 50 miles north of Belgrade. I had been told by my three guards that if any civilians died during this evening's air raids I was going to be held responsible. Plans were also underway to turn me over to the Yugoslavian army for a possible trial. No charges pending — being an American was enough.

Time was running out. An eerie darkness had again descended upon the Balkans, and *SOF* was there.

It had been nearly two weeks now since the first salvos of U.S. Navy-launched Tomahawk cruise missiles slammed into strategic targets in Kosovo, Novi Sad and Belgrade.

Those first hours had been as strange and as out-of-control as any we had ever spent in our nearly 10 years of covering the collapse of Yugoslavia. Here is our reporter's notebook:

*Day One, 24 March:* With a complete collapse of the U.S.-led diplomatic mission to Belgrade, Yugoslavian interior ministry police (MUP) begin to quickly snuff out any independent media voices, starting with the confiscation of a number of major Western media TV satellite transmission dishes and cameras. CNN is temporarily taken off the air. Belgrade independent radio station B-92 is shut down by a force of 15 plain-clothes security police.

Associated Press (AP) evacuates its entire team from Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, in advance of any potential NATO bombing. They tell *SOF* after arriving in Belgrade that total panic had ensued in Kosovo, with paramilitary gangs kidnapping prominent Albanians and reports of widespread ethnic cleansing taking place in the countryside. They also tell of widespread looting and shooting.

## **Calm Before The Storm**

In Belgrade the mood is calm, perhaps encouraged by official assurances from Yugoslavian authorities that only military targets would be hit. We see no signs of any air defense systems being mobilized.

Cars drive normally on the streets and street cars continued to function, although they are mostly empty. Only the occasional police car, lights and sirens blaring, interrupts the eerie calm.

Later in the day, as evening approaches, gasoline and diesel become practically non-existent. Panic-buying and the Yugoslavian Army's confiscation of the nation's diesel stock has created



(above, left) Smoke and fire rise into morning air over major Yugoslavian air base near Batajnica, 10 miles north of Belgrade, from overnight NATO air strikes 28 March. (above) Yugoslavian soldier and dog examine damage to their base at Kraguljevac, 31 March, and (left) Serbian police officer stands guard over what remains of Sloboda factory in southern city of Cacak. Factory — which claims it made only civilian goods — received upward of a dozen cruise missile hits.



(left) Lone protester with Yugoslavian flag stands at bottom of massive bomb crater at Yugo army maintenance facility in Kraguljevac. (above) Workers at Sloboda factory in Cacak examine damage. Although maintaining factory only produced civilian goods, large sections were roped off "because of unexploded ordnance [sic]." (below, left) Smoke pours skyward from Yugoslavian air force base outside Belgrade, targeted throughout week long NATO air attacks. This attack involved three cruise missiles. (right) Worker at Sloboda factory examines damage estimated at \$700 million by factory director — a lot for factory that made only "hair dryers, stoves and vacuum cleaners ..."



long lines, and a bit of worry on the part of most who are reporting on this situation that traveling around Yugoslavia once action begins, will not only be dangerous but difficult without a secure source of fuel.

"Oh, my God!" we hear one of the Serbian translators working for a Western TV station yell, pointing north towards Novi Belgrade, "Look at that. It's on fire!"

It is 2000 hours, the NATO attack against Yugoslavia has begun. Another flash of fire lights up the sky, glowing for a few minutes before receding into blackness. Air raid sirens go on and off as more cruise missiles strike at targets around the city.

Intermittent flashes can be seen on all sides from our vantage point on the roof of our hotel. Mobile telephones and land lines go down immediately, although it is unclear whether that is a result of damage to the network or to overloading.

Serbian TV begins showing old WWII movies, with Partisans taking on Nazis. Dozens of journalists, who had been up on the roof of the Hyatt hotel watching the bombing, are arrested by security forces and expelled from the country. Only two minutes of advance warning from a friendly Serb saves *SOF* from an early arrest.

*Day Two, 25 March:* The streets of Belgrade are quiet and empty. Paranoia, however, is running at a fever pitch. The hotel staff are all upset, and we assume ready to kill any one of us for little or no reason beyond our coming from the States.

At 0530 we go north to the Yugoslavian air force base at Batajnica, 12 miles from Belgrade. Thick columns of smoke and fire rise from beyond the tree line. The base has been struck overnight by a number of cruise missiles. Soldiers and police are on the streets. We make some photos and return to Belgrade to develop our film.

### Watching A High-Tech War

Around noon internationally wanted war criminal Zeljko Raznatovic, better known as Arkan, comes into the lobby of the Hyatt with two of his associates and yells "everyone get the fuck out of here now." Within minutes the lobby is clear, with dozens of guests forced to wait nearly an



Serbian citizens dance atop wing of USAF F-117A stealth fighter, which came down night of 27 March about 2 miles from perimeter of Serbian air base near Budjanovci, 25 miles west of Belgrade. U.S. Special Forces, based in Bosnia, rescued pilot for return to U.S. via Italy. This is first time a Stealth craft was downed during combat ops.

hour in the hotel's car port for him to leave. All embassies in Belgrade not already shut down begin organizing convoys to remove their staff to either Zagreb, Croatia, or Budapest, Hungary. Reuters, the British news service, evacuates all of its international staff. A number of other Western media organizations order their staff out of Belgrade. Within hours, *SOF* and NBC are the only U.S.-based media organization left in the city.

At night the city is completely blacked out. Rumors abound that there has been an attempted coup by a cadre of army officers against Yugoslavian president Slobodan Milosevic. We later learn that Milosevic has replaced a number of key, high-ranking officers within the army at the behest of hard-

liners within his government. The BBC and CNN have both been told to leave Yugoslavia, and are escorted to the Hungarian border.

Downtown Belgrade is deserted. No army or police on the streets. We visit an air raid shelter in downtown, and are told to leave by a small group of about 10 angry civilians.

*Day Three, 26 March:* At 0500 drive again to Batajnica air force base. More fire and smoke coming from the base. During the night at least three cruise missiles have destroy maintenance facilities and damaged the runways.

MUP units are now blocking the main Belgrade-to-Budapest highway. Behind them, under an overpass, sit three MiG fighter aircraft. We drive onto a secondary road and parallel the airfield. From about a quarter of a mile away we photograph the fighters on the highway with smoke from the air strikes behind them.

This is a high-tech war. There are no front lines. No trenches. Just cruise missiles and smart bombs.



Anti-NATO rally in Belgrade turned violent when protesters against regime of Slobodan Milosevic clashed with nationalist marchers in city center. No one was injured. (above) Yugoslavs march through streets of Belgrade on 29 March to protest NATO bombing. (left) As NATO entered fourth day of air strikes against military targets in Yugoslavia, citizens gathered to celebrate Serbian National Day protest bombing.

## Media Bashing, Belgrade-Style

The local population is totally against the foreign media. No one in Yugoslavia has any experience with a free press. Everyone we speak with believes that *SOF* is some sort of U.S. government magazine, and that we are agents. Little do they know!

At midday we drive south to Kragujevac, Yugoslavia's "Detroit." Kragujevac is home to the giant Zastava factory, the plant which makes the infamous Yugo car and produces a sizable amount of the Yugoslavian army's armor.

None of us speak as we drive out of Belgrade. All eyes are glued to the horizon, looking for incoming cruise missiles or fighter aircraft. We are also searching for gasoline.

This has really become a conflict fueled by the paramilitaries. Arkan and his gang have been reported to still be in Kosovo, killing and kidnapping Albanian citizens and any Serbs brave enough to voice opposition to the regime.

Kragujevac seems untouched by the reported overnight attacks. We see nothing out of the ordinary and drive back to Belgrade. The American, French, British and German information and education center, along with their embassies, have been attacked and trashed by a rampaging mob of about 30 people. Policemen stand nearby and do nothing, but when we try to photograph the damage we are threatened with arrest.

At 1600 and 1800 air raid sirens sound. At 2200 another air raid begins. The air strike is massive. I watch five cruise missiles slam into a Yugoslavian army complex about five miles from my hotel. The initial blast is immense, sending a white ball of fire hundreds of feet into the air. The hotel management demands that everyone head for the shelters. It's complete chaos. All power goes out, and phone lines are dead. More cruise missiles land north of the city, but still no triple-A fire or SAM missile response.

### Shoot The Press, Wag The Dog

We run down the fire-exit stairs and get into our car, driving towards the immense fire that glows on the horizon. Word has it that NATO struck a Yugoslavian Army rocket-motor assembly bunker. Serbian radio claims it is a civilian paint factory. The streets are empty as we drive towards the blast. We pass a number of Yugoslavian army MPs with gas masks on. Some civilians stand in front of their homes looking at the fire. We try to get close, but in the darkness it is impossible. We return to the hotel and collapse.

*Day Four, 27 March:* At 0430 we drive towards site of the rocket motor assembly bunker in the Belgrade suburb of Rusanj. White wisps of smoke coming through a thicket of trees mark the spot. No MPs or police block our advance, but with only a half-tank of gas left we don't have the ability to drive very far.

Back in Belgrade after the daily government press briefing we spot Arkan downtown buying a case of Fanta soda and some cookies. He's decked out in new Tommy Hilfinger clothing and driving a 1998 black Ford Frontier 4x4 with Belgrade tags BG 2999.

Everything in Yugoslavia is now upside down. Yes is no. No is yes, and the truth is a lie. As we're sitting across from the Hotel Moskva we hear a loud blast and air raid sirens once more go off. CNN, who are now back in town along with the BBC as a result of the liberal Deputy Prime Minister Vuk Draskovic, have reported that a cruise missile struck a factory northeast of Belgrade.

Baghdad is a picnic compared to Belgrade. At least the Iraqis respect journalists and don't attempt to kill them. Not so in the Balkans. Journalists here are the target. Threats are common, and the police have proven that they don't appreciate our presence.

Back at the hotel, Serb TV is showing *Wag the Dog* with Serbian subtitles.

*Day Five, 28 March:* We go back to Batajnica air base at 0800 to view the results of the 0645 air strike. Smoke and fire are heavy. We nearly run into a Yugoslavian army roadblock but double back to Belgrade with tires screeching.

### Stealth Down

There are more air raid sirens in Belgrade as we pull into the hotel parking lot. The Yugoslavian army is organizing a "photo safari" to Budjanovci, an hour northwest of Belgrade where the night before a U.S. F-117A stealth fighter came down.

The plane lies in a farm field about a 1/2-mile from the edge of a village and about 2 miles from the outermost perimeter fence of a Yugoslav army base. When we arrive, about 30 locals are busy pulling pieces off of one of the plane's wings which has been dragged to within a few feet of a farmer's house.

A local points out bullet holes on the wing and tells me that it was shot down. However, on closer examination the holes are too small to be anti-aircraft and appear to have been put there after the plane came down. We hear over the BBC that the pilot was rescued six hours after the crash by a special team from the U.S. based in Tuzla, Bosnia. The locals say that's a lie, and that they will continue to look for the pilot.

The local Yugo army commander decides the fun is over and gets a front-end loader to bring the fuselage of the plane, plus the other wing, closer to town so a flat-bed truck can be brought in to take the plane back to Belgrade.

A mass demonstration is set for downtown Belgrade. Tens of thousands have shown up to protest NATO and listen to Serbian music and political speeches. We make photos, but quickly retire to the hotel for dinner and rest.

Arkan and his wife, along with another couple, are having dinner directly behind us in the hotel restaurant. Afterwards he comes to our table and invites *SOF* to join him for lunch or "something" tomorrow at his office in the Obilic section of Belgrade. We agree. No air strikes on Belgrade tonight. In fact, the city's lights are left on.

### "Dances With Wolves"

*Day Six, 29 March:* After sleeping late we rush to the information ministry to register. All journalists who fail to do so will be declared *persona non grata*. Later we run back to the hotel to get some word from the visiting Russian diplomatic mission on whether tomorrow's visit by Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov is still a go.

At 1430 we drive to Arkan's office in Obilic. We are greeted at the entrance to the cafe he owns by a very tall blonde who asks us to wait for a few minutes. "Zeljko is with his wife, and will be a few minutes late," she tells us.

Two video cameras are trained on us. Finally Arkan shows up and greets us like old friends. His English is perfect, and between talking about soccer and his aunt who lives in Cleveland, Ohio, he tells us how much he loves America and how much he hates the Russians.

When we ask him why he wasn't in Kosovo, as much of the world's media reported he was, he said he would go there to fight only when NATO ground forces are committed. "Then I would fight to the death," he tells *SOF*.

Back in town, a group of anti-Milosevic protesters emerge out of the woodwork and begin beating protesters marching against



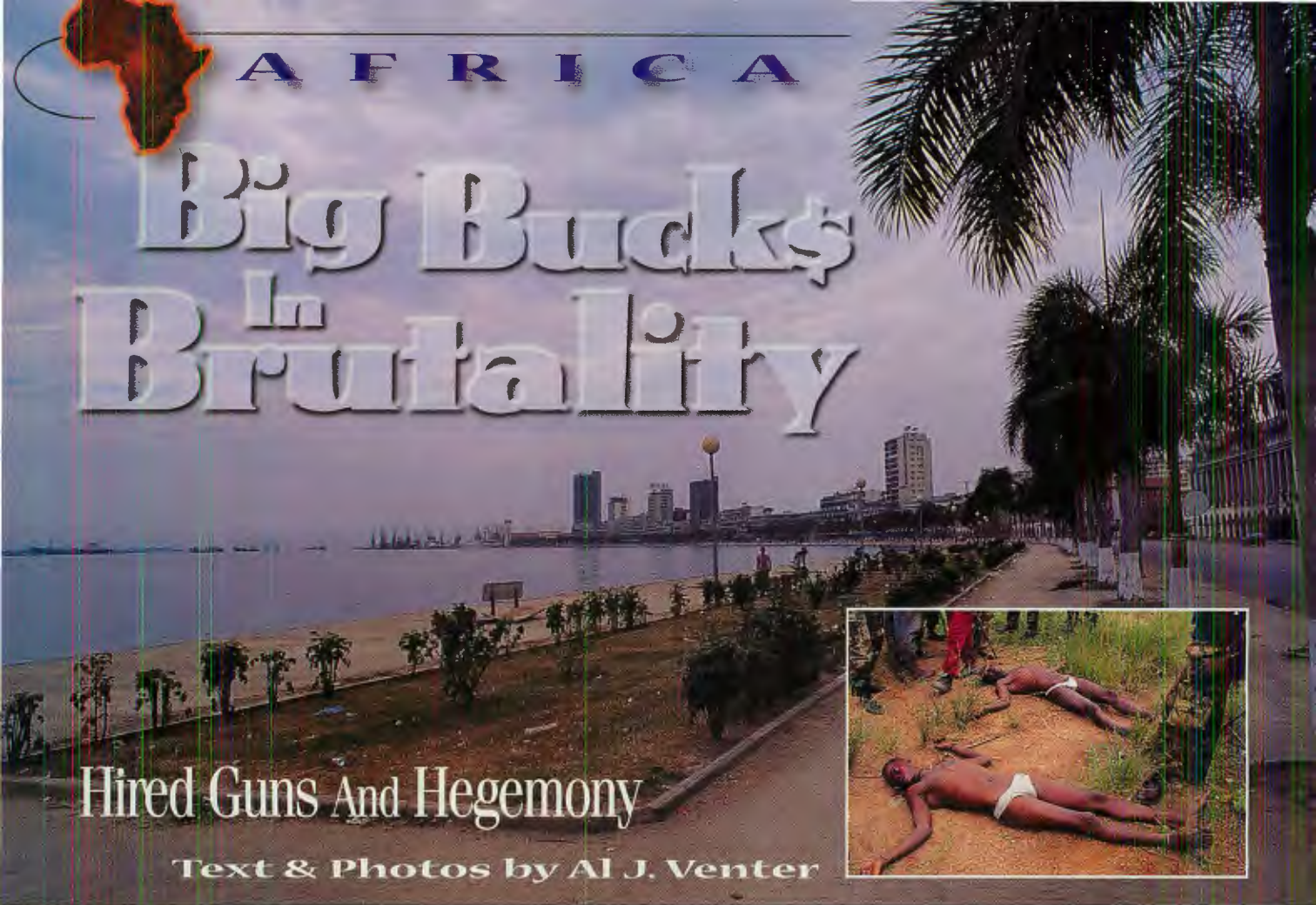
Correspondent Milstein (left) was invited to lunch with Zeljko Raznatovic (aka Arkan). Wanted by Interpol for string of murders and bank robberies committed in folly of his youth, Arkan rose to prominence during breakup of Yugoslavia as head of Serbian Volunteer Guard, the "Tigers," that methodically pillaged areas overrun by Serb forces in Bosnia. Then-Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger stated Arkan should face a war-crimes tribunal. Instead, Arkan returned to Serbia to become kingpin in rackets, and entered politics on Serbian Unity Party ticket for "God and Serbia" (see "Outlaw Merc," April '94).

Continued on page 72

# Big Bucks In Brutality

## Hired Guns And Hegemony

Text & Photos by Al J. Venter



Neill Ellis, a South African merc pilot who is flying a Russian Mi-17 helicopter gunship for ECOMOG, the Nigerian peacekeeping force in Sierra Leone, says that he has work aplenty for the foreseeable future. There are so many “freelance” contracts out there, he told *Soldier Of Fortune*, that some of his colleagues were buying their own helicopters and offering their services.

Ellis, who flew Mi-24 and Mi-17 gunships for the now-defunct Executive Outcomes (EO) mercenary organization in Angola and Sierra Leone, has been active militarily in Africa for almost his adult life.

Speaking on the phone from Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, Ellis confirmed he’d been offered gunship pilot jobs by the warring factions on both sides of the ongoing wars in Angola and the Congo. And since he no longer regards himself a fully fledged soldier of fortune, he declined them all, though he admits that the money was good. Freebooter pilots can

make as much as \$2,000 an hour.

### Elsewhere In Africa

South African mercenaries are involved elsewhere in Africa. A report in London’s Africa Confidential claims that a colonel who worked in intelligence for the apartheid-era South African Army, had sent 3,000 “volunteers” into Sierra Leone to fight for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels. While the numbers are inflated — 300 would be a more likely figure — Ellis confirmed he had encountered some South African ground troops while fighting for ECOMOG. He even exchanged fire with them.

“I have worked with these people in Angola and elsewhere and their assault tactics were textbook South African,” he main-

tained. This was later confirmed when some of their bodies were identified. Those caught had been summarily executed by the Nigerians. The irony is that in Sierra Leone, Angola and the Congo — with South Africans facing each other on both sides in all three conflicts — there have been instances where members of the same family were recruited by opposing armies.

South Africans aren’t the only nationals who regard Africa as a killing field. In Sierra Leone a large group of Ukrainians, Bosnians as well as some Serbs were involved, fighting for the rebels. Again, numbers are sketchy. What is clear is that these East Europeans, hardened by bitter fighting in places such as Chechnya and Georgia (and bolstered by South African professionals), crushed the Nigerian Army with ease.

All of these dogs of war had entered the country under the auspices of President Charles Taylor of Liberia. Herein lies another development, following a United States



(above) Luanda was once a graceful, enchanting, Portugal colonial city. The original buildings still stand, but the place has become a suppurating slum in war-torn Africa. (inset) Pair of dead gooks after merc helicopter gunship strike. Locals stripped them of everything, including their uniforms. (left) Kamajor hunters in Sierra Leone were often all that was between the rebels and survival during recent onslaught out of Liberia.

State Department warning that the war in Sierra Leone was fueled and funded by a variety of foreign sources, Liberia, Burkina Faso and Libya among them. David Scheffer, the State Department's ambassador-at-large for war crimes, declared on 11 February that "those who work with the rebels are as subject to investigation and persecution as the rebels themselves." Bosnia has proved that this is not idle talk.

### Amputations For Fun

Scheffer highlighted the particularly brutal nature of this war. Hospitals, he said were full of people — many of them children — who had "had their hands, feet or ears chopped off in macabre displays of terror." While conditions in Freetown are bad enough even in peacetime, the city now hosts more people without limbs than anywhere else on the globe. Most of the victims (which include an inordinate number of pre-teen girls) had their arms and legs amputated with machetes for no other reason than that the rebels — some of them eight or nine years old — had nothing better to do.

There is mayhem elsewhere on the continent. In months past, Savimbi has taken his guerrillas much farther afield than before. For instance, UNITA cadres, with some mercenary support, are active once again in Angola's northeast Lunda Norte Province, the source of most of the country's diamonds. Almost 650 miles to the southwest, 13 people were killed in an ambush after a truck detonated a UNITA mine near the port of Lobito. Both are hundreds of miles from the main thrust of the war. UNITA has also captured areas on the Congo border and is using trucks to ferry in war material from bases that date from the time that the neighbor was called Zaire.

Rebel troops have also been making their way up the Atlantic coast toward Soyo, north of Luanda, and UNITA has laid siege to several large towns, though this scenario could change at any time. During 1994, the Soyo refinery was prevented from falling into rebel hands by the presence of South African mercenaries. It was the first major battle of the war that EO fought. By taking casualties, the South African soldiers of fortune proved they were serious. Substantial contracts (estimated by London's *Daily Telegraph* to be somewhere in the region of \$100 million) followed and again these professional killers became a factor in another African conflict.

### Air War

Ultimately, the outcome of the war in Angola is likely to be dictated from the air. And since UNITA has no air force of its own, the odds are hardly stacked in its favor. Savimbi has other options, though. This became apparent following the shooting down of two United Nations C-130 supply planes on the outskirts of Huambo. Now that UN aid flights have been suspended, millions of Angolans living in the interior face starvation. Until late last year, there were about 2 million Angolans



Remains of Mi-17 knocked out at Saurimo by UNITA raiding party. Some South African mercs were killed in the attack.



Part of Sierra Leone's problem is its national army, which is disorganized, insubordinate and almost always blown away on liquor or dope. That's why rebels had a succession of field days in recent invasion.



Mercs and Angolan soldiers crowd a returned Mi-17 bringing in wounded from bush battle with UNITA.

dependent on UN food handouts.

A problem for Luanda is that Savimbi has acquired a lot of Russian man-portable SA 14/16 ground-to-air anti-aircraft missiles. This was done with end-user certificates ostensibly issued by the West African states of Benin and Burkina Faso. Both countries (it was claimed by Angola in a protest note to the UN secretary-general) are also training Savimbi's army. In retaliation, Castro sent a fairly large body of Cuban soldiers to Angola — estimated to be well into four figures — to help Luanda's still-Marxist government forces. Since this is in direct contravention of the peace accord originally brokered by U.S. Under-Secretary of State Chester Crocker in 1989, it will be instructive to see how Washington reacts to this provocation. The accord ended direct South African military involvement in the Angolan civil war and caused Cuba to withdraw 30,000 soldiers from Africa.

### Libya's Role

Nor is it a secret that Libya (together with France and China) is funding Kabila's Congo efforts against a powerful group of secessionists who now dominate much of that vast country. That much was admitted in January by an aide to President Mugabe, the Zimbabwe president. Like much else, it too has since been denied, even though a battalion of Zimbabwe soldiers was ambushed by the rebels in March and almost 100 of them killed, including some of their senior commanders.

Watch for a coup by a very disgruntled Zimbabwean army pissed about having to

Since then, Qaddafi has involved himself in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. Most of the arms used by the RUF in its recent attacks on Freetown and elsewhere came into the country from Libya, through Liberia, after having been transhipped at Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso. Qaddafi also provides a lot of the cash. Taylor, as always, creams a percentage off the top for himself.

### Continent At War

Clearly, Africa is unraveling. There are almost 50 wars being waged worldwide and almost half of them are on the "Dark Continent." Russian mercenaries have flown MiGs for both sides in the recent wars between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

According to a source at London's International Institute for Strategic Studies, prospects for the future of Africa are bleak because "weapons brokers and extraneous

factions — not all of whom are African — have become involved."

Look at the record: Uganda, with dollops of U.S. financial and military help, is supporting mainly Christian rebel armies in southern Sudan. American military specialists, while hardly mercenary, have been active for years bolstering the ability of Yowerri Museveni's regular army. Similarly, the Sudan has accepted (at the behest of Osama bin Laden, it is rumored in Khartoum) Afghan *mujahideen* to fight the Muslim/Christian war in the south. These Asian fighters can be regarded as mercenaries since they are getting paid for their work.

All these factors, together, underscore the remarkable difficulty in attempting to piece together what is really taking place in so much of Africa. Angola in particular — a vast and primitive land twice the size of Texas — is a master of obfuscation and invariably presents half a dozen versions of



(above) Russian-built Sukhoi bomber of Angolan air force at Saurimo; these were flown by South African merc pilots. (left) Nigerian air force used these British-built Hawk Fighters to keep rebels in Sierra Leone at bay; it was all part of Nigerian-led ECOMOG force. (below) South African merc Karl Alberts winds up Mi-24 (Hind) gunship at Freetown's Lungi Airport.



fight a foreign war in which they have no interest but also where nobody speaks any English. Déjà vu? Communications, I'm reliably told, barely exist except between their own people. And all of them are 2,000 miles from home!

Libya's role in sub-Saharan conflict is pervasive. The Sudan got itself involved on the government side of the Congo after Kabila had hastily flown to Tripoli to see Muammar Qaddafi. Before that, Chadian soldiers — also Muslim — were sent to fight for Kabila. Their role became uncertain after they had been bloodied by anti-Kabila rebels during their very first action around Kisangani. Aid workers spoke of seeing the bodies of about 300 Chadian troops.



the same story, often within hours of each other. Because Luanda has drawn an almost impenetrable veil of duplicity over everything to do with the war (while keeping the media from entering the region), it is impossible to verify many of the claims.

There are two reasons. First, Angola does not wish to expose the role of South African or any other mercenaries in its armed forces. The official line is that there are no foreign troops or airmen in the country, though numerous reports from travelers, diplomats and those being airlifted out of the country — including some of the wounded who were ferried to South African hospitals — tell other stories. Second, President dos Santos does not wish to give credence to verifiable reports that UNITA has SAMs, especially since three Mikoyan MiG-23s were shot down — again in full view of people on the ground in the central highlands — in early January.

There is also mention of Mi-24 (Hind) helicopter gunships being downed by UNITA missiles. These events follow the crashes of the two C-130s; both were hit within a minute or two of lifting off from Huambo; vapor trails showed the presence of missiles.

### Downed Aircraft

Other aircraft hit by missiles include an Antonov An-12 which went down, killing everybody onboard, shortly after take-off from Luanda late last year, and another in February, where many people on the ground died after it had demolished shacks in a slum. A Russian transport aircraft was hit while attempting to land at Malanje. It landed safely but with casualties. That followed the shooting down by rebels of a private aircraft over Cuito and a helicopter over Benguela province, south of Luanda. Military headquarters in the capital said that it had been struck by "field artillery fire," which most observers regard as rubbish and typical of the sort of disinformation that comes from the top.

### Missile Threat

The missile threat in the southern half of Africa is widespread. It is worrying that some of these might end up in the wrong hands, especially in countries where there is unrest, South Africa included. In the Congo, for instance, the Zimbabwe Air Force lost a Hawker Hunter as well as two of its Bell 205/UH1D gunships to SAMs. Now there are conflicting reports about two Namibian French-built Alouettes that went down in mid-January, killing everyone onboard. Windhoek claimed that they collided in flight. Then it changed its story and said that they had been caught in a storm. The rebels maintain that it was SAMs. That's the problem with African wars: Who does one believe?

Certainly in Angola, the threat of missiles in UNITA hands is being viewed as serious. For a start, it is likely to affect the efficacy of the Angolan Army which, as

previous campaigns have shown, needs close air support to be able to make gains. The rebels have achieved a high degree of mobility in the bush, and experience has shown that such initiative is usually only countered by air power. If the Angolan air force is unable (or unwilling) to halt UNITA strikes because of SAMs, the war could grind on.

Among the first consequences could be that with so many SAMs about, Angolan pilots might refuse to fly. A source told this correspondent that "already some of them are not prepared to venture below 5,000 feet, which makes close air support impossible." And while there are South Africans also flying Angola's helicopters, MiGs and Pilatus PC6s, they might have difficulty in coping with the additional workload if their Angolan colleagues were to stop flying altogether. "It would take time to hire more mercs and have them do



Discarded Russian air-to-air missiles lie on edge of runway in Saurimo. Worth millions, these are valuable wasted assets.

the necessary conversions while UNITA is subjecting such severe military pressure across a front almost 1,000 miles wide and with a dozen major towns," the source maintained.

### Rebels vs. UNITA

Details are just starting to emerge of a vast re-supply operation that has been carried out by UNITA since 1994. Late last year, when FAA spearheaded a powerful three-pronged attack on Savimbi's headquarters at Bailundo and Andulo — both towns nestled in difficult mountainous terrain north of Huambo — the depth and range of UNITA's retaliatory power stunned Luanda. The Angolan Army was repelled by a powerful UNITA offensive that included tanks, IFVs and heavy artillery and took terrible losses. The scale of these defeats might be judged by the fact that since then, Luanda has re-imposed conscription, roping in young men in a sweep that the *New York Times* on 20 January headlined "Press Gangs Keep Government Supplied with Recruits." It has also told its retired air force pilots to report for duty. Meanwhile, in an attempt to consolidate the home front, it withdrew several FAA brigades from the Congo, seriously undermining Kabila's war effort.

There are reasons for this turnabout. For one, UNITA is a keener, leaner fighting force, well aware that if it does not succeed this time, it never will. The fact that Savimbi has accepted within his ranks South Africans who formerly swore allegiance to his blood enemy, says a lot; some of them might be spies. Also, in the previous campaign, the rebel leader keenly observed the manner in which Luanda fielded the versatile, all-terrain Russian BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles and he was awed. It will be recalled that it was a strike force incorporating 27 BMP-2s under the command of EO officers that recaptured the Cafunfo diamond fields in a month-long operation.

Using his own gemstone resources, Savimbi set about acquiring squadrons of BMP-2s immediately after the Lusaka Accord had been signed. Eyewitnesses to recent battles maintain that in spite of a lack of air cover, UNITA weapons are expertly fielded due to the help that the rebels are getting from middle-ranking South African military officers hired specifically for this purpose. It is instructive (and common knowledge in some bars frequented by former special forces operatives in Pretoria) that this force includes a number of EO commanders who fought against UNITA in the 1993/1994 campaign. Savimbi has also placed mercenary commanders at the head of several new tactical training units.

### UNITA's Arsenal

Among weapons that FAA has identified in recent campaigns around Huambo, Kuito, Malanje and elsewhere as having been acquired by UNITA, are South African G5 155mm long-range and FSU D30 medium-range artillery, 106s, as well as multi-barreled ZSU23/24 quads which are ideal for both anti-aircraft and conventional warfare deployment. There are also BM-21 "Grad" vehicle-mounted multiple rocket launchers in quantity. Battle tanks consist mainly of T55/56s. South African armor specialists are active in these departments as well.

Meanwhile, a UNITA defector, 39-year-old Colonel Boaventura Vito Tchingundo, was presented to the media at the Angolan Catumbela air base last February. He said that a lot of the boxes in which the hardware had been delivered (and which included SAM missiles, tanks and long-range artillery) had "Bulgaria" stamped on them. He also disclosed that apart from South Africans fighting for Savimbi, Russian-speaking mercenaries were operating sophisticated weapons for the rebel group.

What is of interest to the West is how Savimbi — with only limited logistical support, considering that so many of the country's bridges have been blown and most of

*Continued on page 73*



# KALASHNIKOV'S

## NEW

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

# .308 VEPR



Russian  
Wild Boar:  
Accurate,  
Reliable,  
Economical

# IN

the middle of nowhere, surrounded only by large farms, lies the small city of *Vyatskie Polyany*, in the Kirov region near Russia's border with Tatarstan. Six thousand of the city's 60,000 inhabitants work at the *Vyatskie Polyany Machine Building Plant* (know as *Molot J.S.C.* — the word "molot" stands for hammer (as in the old Soviet hammer and sickle logo). *Molot* is a justifiably famous facility in the history of Russian small arms. During World War II this factory manufactured two and a half million PPSH41 submachine guns. At that time they also produced about 350 thousand flare signal pistols. Weapons made at this facility were roll-marked with a communist five-pointed star in a shield.

In 1959, manufacture of Mikhail T. Kalashnikov's legendary RPK (*Ruchnoi Pulemet Kalashnikova*) squad automatic commenced at *Vyatskie Polyany*. While clearly evolved from the AKM (*Avtomat Kalashnikova Modernizirovanniy*), the RPK features a heavier barrel, bipod, a rear sight with adjustment for windage, modified forearm and buttstock and a receiver formed from 1.5mm-thick sheet-metal instead of the 1mm-thick material used to fabricate the

AKM. Although it lacks quick-change barrel capability, the RPK weighs only 11 pounds and was generally well-received by all those who deployed with it. It, of course, provides the same outstanding reliability of all the other Kalashnikov small arms series.

In 1992, *Molot* began development of small arms for sporting purposes. In 1994, the VEPR (a species of Russian wild boar), chambered for the 7.62x39mm cartridge, was introduced. Currently, the VEPR is the only Kalashnikov-type firearm that can be imported to the U.S. from Russia. At present available in two calibers, 7.62x39mm and .308 Winchester (7.62x51mm NATO), the U.S. importer, ZDF Import/Export, Inc. (Dept. SOF, 2975 South 300 West, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115; phone: 801-485-1012; fax: 801-484-4363; e-mail: [zdf@robarm.com](mailto:zdf@robarm.com); website: <http://www.robarm.com>) is attempting to obtain BATF approval for versions chambered for the 5.56x45mm NATO (.223) and Russian 5.45x39mm rounds as well.

The VEPR .308 comes in two models, a rifle and a carbine. *Soldier Of Fortune* was recently sent a VEPR .308 Carbine for test and evaluation. The VEPR .308 Carbine, with a pinned and riveted 1.5mm-thick sheet-

metal receiver, has an overall length of 39.75 inches, with a weight, empty, of 8.35 pounds. The four-groove, hammer-forged barrel has a right-hand twist of one turn in 12.6 inches (320 mm) and measures 20.5 inches in length. The bore and chamber are chrome-lined. The rifle's exterior finish appears to be satin-black baked enamel over phosphate.

The year of manufacture and serial number are deeply roll-marked on the left side of the barrel extension. The bolt carrier, bolt body and gas cylinder are roll marked with the last three digits of the serial number. "VYATSKIE POLYANY" and the *Molot* logo have been inscribed on the left receiver wall. The importer's name, the carbine's model and caliber, and "MADE IN RUSSIA" appear on the right side of the receiver.

Both the forearm and buttstock are made from exceptionally attractive walnut. The checkering on the pistol grip and forearm have been executed by hand and provide an excellent gripping surface. The buttstock, a thumbhole-type to appease the cuckoos in the BATF's aviary, has a high-gloss black plastic end cap screwed to the pistol grip and an effective black rubber recoil pad. Both the buttstock and forearm are equipped with sling swivels and a very nice

sporting-grade leather sling is supplied.

A condition of BATF importation approval was that the VEPR could accept no more than a 10-round magazine. As a consequence, the magazine-well was re-designed to accept proprietary magazines of 5- and 10-round capacities only. One of each is supplied with the rifle/carbine. They are of the staggered-column, detachable box-type. The injection-molded black polymer magazine bodies have steel inserts and are every bit as reliable and sturdy as modern synthetic Kalashnikov assault rifle magazines. The follower, follower spring, base-plate and magazine floorplate are also injection-molded polymer components. The single coil follower spring is quite long and very strong, a traditional feature of Russian-made box-type magazines. VEPR magazines have the Cyrillic letters for "VEPR" and a boar's head in a symbolic reticle pattern on the right side of the magazine body. Disassembly is in the conventional manner. There is a flapper-type magazine catch/release of the sort found on all the Kalashnikov series. Also following the Kalashnikov format, there is no hold-open device to keep the bolt group rearward after the last shot has been fired.

The front sight assembly sleeves over the barrel and is held in place by a single cross-pin. The round, post-type front sight is that of the Kalashnikov series and has protective ears. It can be adjusted for elevation zero by screwing it up (to lower the point of impact) or down (to raise the point of impact) in its base. It can be drifted to the right or left for adjustment of windage zero by tapping its cylindrical base pin with a



(opposite) Weighing 8.35 pounds, the VEPR's recoil impulse is only moderate. (above) A 4x32mm VOMZ PILAD Russian-made scope is available for only \$99.95. Sturdy, but stodgy, it nevertheless provides a sharp, crisp image for the right price. (below) Although obviously a sporting rifle, the VEPR .308 Carbine is derived from the RPK light machine gun.

hammer, or, better yet, with a special armor-er's tool designed just for that purpose.

With only two exceptions, the VEPR's rear sight is that of the RPK. The sliding tangent-type elevation scale on the RPK covers elevations from 100 to 1,000 meters in 100-meter increments. The VEPR's elevation scale is graduated in 100-meter increments for distances of 100, 200 and 300 meters only (a Russian requirement for all sporting rifles). The open square-notch rear sight can be adjusted for windage zero on both the RPK and VEPR. The spring-loaded windage adjustment knob is on the right side and it must be pulled out to operate. Rotate the adjustment knob clockwise to move the sight and

the point of impact to the right, and counter-clockwise to shift the point of impact to the left. The RPK has a flip-up open U-notch that has a white horizontal line with a self-luminous dot in the center for firing in low light level environments. This feature has been deleted from the VEPR.

There is a side rail riveted to the left side of the VEPR's receiver. It is of the standard type used for mounting optical devices to the Kalashnikov series. A quick-detachable, throw-lever-type scope mount together with 26mm rings and shims to accommodate a 25mm scope-tube-diameter is included with the VEPR. This mount positions the scope too high above the receiver and thus a prop-



# KALASHNIKOVS: HOW THEY OPERATE

All Kalashnikov rifles and squad automatics are gas-operated, without an adjustable gas regulator and fire from the closed-bolt position. After ignition of the primer and propellant, gases are diverted into the gas cylinder on top of the barrel. The hard-chrome-plated piston is driven rearward and the bolt carrier, attached to the piston extension, goes through about 8.5 mm of free-travel until the gas pressure drops to a safe level. The piston and bolt carrier are threaded and pinned together with a slight amount of free play which is designed to absorb the initial impact of the recoil impulse. A cam-slot milled into the bolt carrier engages the bolt's cam lug and rotates the bolt about 35 degrees to the left to unlock it from its recesses in the barrel extension. Unlike many other designs, the Kalashnikov provides no primary extraction during the bolt rotation. Thus, an exceptionally large extractor claw is required in all calibers. The fixed ejector is part of the left side receiver guide rail. The cocking handle is permanently attached to the bolt carrier and reciprocates with it.

As the bolt travels back it rolls the hammer over and compresses the recoil spring. The bolt group ceases its rearward travel when the carrier slams into the rear end of the receiver. The recoil spring then drives the bolt group forward, another round is stripped from the magazine and chambered, and the bolt then comes to rest. The bolt carrier continues onward for about 5.5mm after the bolt's two locking lugs have engaged their recesses in the barrel extension. The VEPR's long, multiple-strand recoil spring is wrapped around a two-piece, telescoping guide rod assembly. The front retaining cap permits user separation of the spring and rod assembly. The rear end of the guide rod assembly slides into a notch on top of the receiver's end piece and serves to hold the stamped sheet-metal receiver top cover in place.

The trigger mechanism is based upon that of the U.S. .30 M1 Garand. The hammer has two hooks, and there are two sears: a primary sear on an extension of the trigger and a spring-loaded secondary sear directly to the rear. When the hammer is cocked its left side hook is held by the primary sear. When the trigger is pulled, the trigger extension rotates forward and the primary sear disengages, leaving the hammer free to rotate forward. In semi-automatic fire, when the bolt rolls the hammer back, it is caught at the rear by the secondary sear. When the trigger is released, the trigger extension and primary sear move back to catch the hammer as it is released by the secondary sear. In full-



The VEPR .308 Carbine, fieldstripped — its Kalashnikov derivation is clear.

auto, a mode which the VEPR is *not* capable of firing, a boss (missing on the VEPR) on the selector-lever axis pin forces the secondary sear back so that it plays no role in controlling the hammer. The trigger mechanism's mainspring is of the multiple-strand type, which lasts longer and offers better performance under adverse conditions. Trigger pull weight on *SOF's* test specimen was only 3.5 pounds, but exhibited the horrendous creep associated with all Kalashnikovs.

The auto-safety-sear which protrudes through a slot in the right receiver rail of all Russian-made, selective-fire Kalashnikovs is not present on the VEPR. In full-auto, the auto-safety-sear holds the hammer back and it must be tripped by the bolt carrier to free the hammer to fire another round. The five-component anti-bounce device added to the trigger mechanism when pinned and riveted, sheet-metal receivers replaced the milled, forged receivers of the AK47 series, has also been deleted from the VEPR. Its primary function is to prevent firing out of battery during burst fire sequences.

The selector lever, a stamped sheet-metal bar on the right side of the receiver is manipulated by the thumb and remains, in my opinion, one of the Kalashnikov's few defects. It is noisy, stiff and difficult to operate (especially so on the VEPR). The top position is safe and marked *S*. In this position, the trigger is blocked, but the bolt can be retracted just enough to see if the chamber has a loaded round. The lower position, marked *F*, is for semiautomatic fire.

—P.G.K.

er and repeatable cheek weld is not possible. A 4x32mm VOMZ PILAD Russian-made scope with a 25mm tube is available for only \$99.95. The scope is equipped with lens caps and both a rubber ocular eyepiece and objective sun shade. The eyepiece provides the correct eye relief of 2.7 inches. Field of view is six degrees. While not



VEPR's buttstock, a thumbhole-type to appease the cuckoos in the BATF's aviary, has a high-gloss black plastic end cap screwed to the pistol grip and an effective black rubber recoil pad.

exactly the cutting edge of modern optical technology, the sturdy, but stodgy, 4x32mm VOMZ PILAD nevertheless provides a sharp, crisp image for the right price.

This scope has an unusual rangefinding reticle pattern that has been adapted from the optical sights of the RPG7V rocket launcher and Dragunov sniper rifle. It consists of a series of steps above a solid base line. Every other step is marked in two-hundred-meter intervals, from "2" (the third step from the top) to "10" (the step closest to the base line). On this particular scope's reticle there is also a step marked "1" for 100 meters, with an additional unmarked step between "1" and "2" for 150 meters. Just align the target with its bottom on the base line. The system is based upon a humanoid target 5 feet 7 inches (1.7 meters) in height. The step that matches the top of a target of this approximate height indicates its distance to you in meters. There is also a graduated scale, covering plus/minus 10 mils in 1-mil increments, for windage adjustment above the elevation reticle pattern. Use the inverted "V" in the center of the windage scale as your aiming point. Both the Israelis and Swarovski of Austria have copied this rangefinder reticle pattern.

The adjustment increments on the 4x32mm VOMZ PILAD scope's elevation and windage knobs cover 1.2-minute intervals. The interval between the numbers is 3.6 minutes. After the scope/rifle/ammunition interface has been zeroed at 100 meters, the caps on top of the knobs should be lifted by unscrewing their retaining screws and the scale drums removed and reinstalled with the zero mark set to the index line at the bottom of the knob assembly. Then the rifle should be zeroed at greater distances and the settings required for a specific distance marked on a range card attached to the rifle's buttstock. Use the rangefinder reticle to determine the distance



(left) With all of the reliability and durability expected from any Kalashnikov-derived firearm, the VEPR .308 is an attractive and reasonably priced package for both hunters and survivalists.

(below) Russian-made VEPR .308 Carbine fired consistent 1.25 MOA groups with Black Hills match-grade ammunition.



VEPR .308 Carbine comes equipped with a leather sling, scope mount with rings, cleaning kit, oil bottle and one each of the 5- and 10-round magazines.

to the target and then just dial in the required "come up" on the elevation knob.

A black plastic oil bottle and AK butt-stock-type cleaning kit are also supplied with the VEPR rifle/carbine. The cleaning kit contains a nylon bore brush, slotted cleaning rod tip, a small punch, a combination tool with a screwdriver on one end and a front sight adjustment tip on the other end. The tubular sheet-metal container for these components contains several slots used to disassemble the weapon.

Disassembly of the VEPR is quite easy and follows the usual AK sequence. Remove the magazine and clear the weapon after placing the selector lever in the *F* (fire) position. Push in on the rear end of the guide rod, which protrudes from a square hole in the rear of the top cover, and lift off the top cover. Push the guide rod forward and off its retaining slot at the end of the receiver. Lift it up slightly and withdraw the guide rod and follower from the back end of the bolt carrier. Pull the bolt carrier all the way to the rear and withdraw it from the receiver. Rotate the bolt clockwise until it can be separated from the bolt carrier/piston assembly. The gas cylinder can be removed by inserting the end of the gas cylinder's retaining lever into the narrowest slot on the cleaning kit's tubular

*Continued on page 69*

## VEPR .308 CARBINE SPECIFICATIONS

**Caliber:** 7.62x51mm NATO (.308 Winchester) — also available in 7.62x39mm.

**Operation:** Gas-operated; no regulator; rotary bolt; semiautomatic-only.

**Weight, empty:** 8.35 pounds.

**Length, overall:** 39.75 inches.

**Barrel:** Hammer-forged; four-grooves with a right-hand twist of one turn in 12.6 inches (320 mm); bore and chamber are chrome-lined.

**Barrel length:** 20.5 inches.

**Feed mechanism:** Five- or 10-round, staggered-column, detachable, black polymer, steel-reinforced magazines.

**Furniture:** Checkered walnut forearm and buttstock; thumbhole buttstock has a black rubber recoil pad.

**Finish:** Black baked enamel over phosphate.

**Iron sights:** Open square-notch rear sight with sliding, tangent-type elevation scale in 100-meter increments from 100 to 300 meters, adjustable for windage; round, post-type front sight with protective ears, adjustable for both elevation and windage zero.

**Optical sight:** 4x32mm VOMZ PILAD Russian-made scope, equipped with lens caps and both a rubber ocular eyepiece and objective sun shade, eye relief of 2.7 inches, field of view is 6 degrees, rangefinding reticle pattern from Dragunov sniper rifle.

**Manufacturer:** Molet Machine Building Plant JSC, Dept. SOF, 26 Sotsialsticheskaya Street, Kovrov 601909, Vladimir Region, Russia.

**Importer:** ZDF Import/Export, Inc., Dept. SOF, 2975 South 300 West, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115; phone: 801-485-1012; fax: 801-484-4363; e-mail: zdf@robarm.com; website: <http://www.robarm.com>

**Suggested retail price:** \$699.95, complete with a leather sling, scope mount with rings, cleaning kit, oil bottle and one each of the 5- and 10-round magazines.

**T&E summary:** All of the reliability and durability associated with the Kalashnikov series with excellent 1.25 MOA accuracy.

# Omega PROVING ground

## LR 300

Having first emerged nearly 40 years ago, the AR-15 continues to evolve into a state-of-the-art weapons system. The latest of these, and one of the most impressive, is the new .223 caliber LR 300 carbine from Z-M Weapons High Performance Systems (Dept. SOF, 203 South High Street, Bernardston, MA 01337; phone: 413-648-9501).

Since conventional AR-15s use a recoil spring housed inside the buttstock, equipping them with a folding stock is impossible. Because of the limitations of the recoil spring tube, even the standard retractable stock found on many AR-15 carbines only collapses a few inches from full length. The LR 300 overcomes these limitations.

Based on the proven AR-15 system of direct gas operation, the LR 300 uses a lower receiver identical to the AR-15, while the upper receiver incorporates significant differences. In order to allow a true folding stock, the bolt carrier is modified by shortening it to almost half its normal length, giving it clearance to travel rearward before being stopped by the fixed buffer at the front of the folding stock in the back of the upper receiver.

Since the LR 300 has no room for a recoil spring group behind the bolt carrier, this system is housed in front of it, pulling the bolt group forward instead of pushing it as in the AR-15. In retaining a direct gas system of operation, the LR 300's bolt carrier key has been greatly extended and the gas tube has been shortened. In assembly, the key overlaps the gas tube, reaching almost to the gas block/sight base. Surrounding the key tube is a high temperature recoil spring held captive by a crescent lock that fits into a groove in the front of the key. Bearing against a recess in front of the special barrel nut, the recoil

spring exerts constant forward pressure on the bolt group.

This assembly allows the use of a true folding stock. Z-M Weapons redesigned the stock to not only fold, but also retract and extend to five positions. Especially important to law enforcement tactical teams, the ability to instantly shorten or lengthen a buttstock allows the weapon to be adjusted to the size of individual officers, and adapt to the use of thick body armor or heavy clothing. If space is a premium, the stock can be instantly folded out of the way. Like the LR 300's upper and lower receivers, its folding stock is made of aircraft quality 6061/T6 alloy finished to MilSpec.

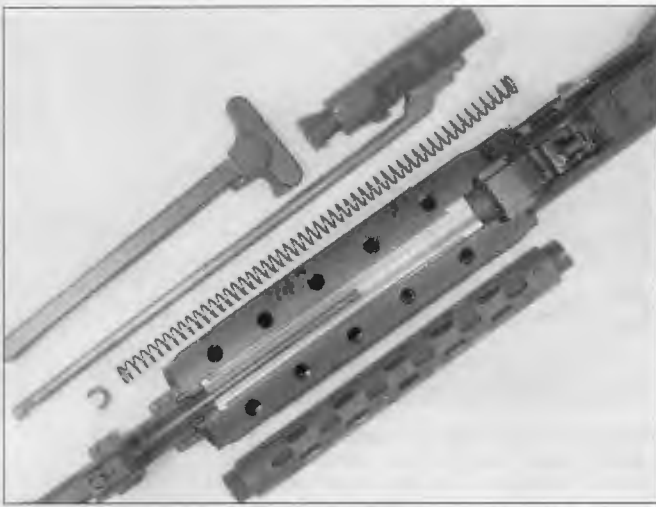
The LR 300's handguard is also like nothing else you've seen. Made of extremely tough synthetic, the handguard mounts to a collar in front of the barrel nut and another behind the front sight base. This handguard is not quick detachable, but is open on top to access the recoil spring group for field stripping. Covering the recoil spring group is a narrow removable ventilated steel upper handguard.

While the first version of the LR 300 used a fixed front sight, the new model has a folding sight with a Tri-Mount Weaver base underneath. This mount accommodates a number of accessories such as the SureFire Tactical Light from Laser Products (Dept. SOF, 18300 Mt. Baldy Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708; phone: 714-545-9444). Integral with the front sight base is a specially designed internal gas diversion/retention system that provides positive function with a variety of .223 caliber ammunition. On the bottom of the handguard are five mounting holes for a vertical foregrip.

Designed without a carrying handle, the LR 300's upper receiver is of the flattop variety with an integral MIL-STD-1913 rail 0.40 inches



Brass flies as Ben Avery fires LR 300 with Trijicon Reflex sight.



After removing its top cover, the LR 300's recoil spring and bolt groups fieldstrip without tools as shown.

higher than normal. This additional height is better suited for mounting optics, and also houses an adjustable peep aperture rear sight. Both front and rear sights have Trijicon night inserts. The receiver rail is compatible with scopes, night vision devices and electronic sights.

Because of its shorter bolt carrier, the LR 300 uses a forward assist mounted immediately behind the ejection port. Having a flat surface on the front of its housing allows it to also serve as a case deflector.

Designed and produced by ZM-Weapons is a special synthetic pistol grip. Unique in its shape, this grip also differs in its angle and duplicates that of the 1911 pistol. A modified version of this or an AR-15 pistol grip is also used as the foregrip.

Of the highest quality, ZM-Weapons' barrels assure optimum accuracy. Available in 16.25 inches for private citizens, and 11.5 inches for military or law enforcement, these barrels are capable of minute of angle accuracy. In testing an LR 300 with the 11.5-inch barrel, I had no trouble achieving 100 yard groups of 1.5 inches using match grade

.223 ammunition and an Aimpoint Comp ML red dot sight (Dept. SOF, 420 W. Main St., Geneseo, IL 61254; phone: 309-944-5631). In firing this carbine extensively, I encountered no failures whatsoever. The 11.5-inch barrel comes with a 4-prong flash suppressor.

Offered as a complete weapon, or in kit form, the LR 300 can be had semi-automatic only with the 16.25-inch barrel, or in a selective fire version for law enforcement and military use with either barrel length. Semiautomatic kits will install on pre-ban AR-15 style lower receiver groups in minutes. The LR 300 is also available in other calibers such as 7.62x39mm, but only for quantity orders.

Well-designed and of extremely high quality, the LR 300 is not for everyone. But for the professional, this mission-specific .223 carbine offers features found on no other.

— Gary Paul Johnston

<b>LR 300</b>	
<b>SPECIFICATIONS</b>	
<b>Caliber:</b>	.223 Remington (others available).
<b>Type Of Fire:</b>	Semi-automatic or selective fire (military/law enforcement ONLY).
<b>Rate Of Fire:</b>	950 rpm (full-automatic version only).
<b>System Of Operation:</b>	Direct gas.
<b>Barrel:</b>	11.5 inches (LE only) or 16.25 inches, chrome-lined, 1 in 9 twist.
<b>Overall Length:</b>	(stock extended) 31" (11-1/2" bbl.); (stock folded) 21.5" (11-1/2" bbl.).
<b>Weight:</b>	7 pounds (11-1/2" bbl.); 16-1/4" bbl., 7.2 pounds.
<b>Feed Device:</b>	All standard AR-15 magazines.
<b>Sights:</b>	(front) Protected post with Trijicon insert adjustable for elevation; (rear) Peep aperture with Trijicon insert adjustable for W/E.
<b>Safety:</b>	Thumb safety selector.
<b>Finish:</b>	MilSpec.
<b>Price:</b>	\$1,995.00 (sugg. ret.).



Coleman's Advanced Products Group has developed the one-hand-portable generator (12/24V DC, 120V AC) you always wanted because you knew you would use it — just in time to tell your significant other it's for her safety during Y2K!

# Y2K Kilowatt

The philosopher observed "the first of things is water." True in ancient Greece, but in the electric age he might have declared "the first of things is electricity, as it will bring you water, then boil it or freeze it and give you light and labor in the bargain."

Normalcy in modern life is predicated on reliable electric power. Living off the power grid, you probably have alternate energy on line as a generator powered by wind, water or engine.

What if you're *on* the grid, and *the grid goes off-line*? Lots of time living or working off the grid taught us that providing your own power is easy with a good generator — *if you have a good generator*.

Whatever the scenario for Y2K, you may need an adequate generator to keep you going. And you want something you will be glad you bought, even if it turns out you don't need it next 1 January.

At minimum you need enough power to keep a freezer frozen, run electric lights and a furnace blower, power appliances from washing machines to power tools — and sophisticated enough to deliver precisely 120V at 60 cycles to run modern electronics such as TVs and computers. For emergency use, of course, running such items one-at-a-time usually suffices.

A glad-I-bought-it item you will later use again and again when off the power grid on various junkets, must be small enough to have with you but strong enough to operate one-man power tools, and jump-start large engines.

How does 1,100 watts in a 23-pound unit sound? Which will also jump-start a 12V engine @ 90 amps and a 24V engine @ 45 amps? *That burns less than a quart an hour at 50% load?*

You're right: what it sounds like is a breakthrough, and it is.

Coleman, the folks who have kept my camp lit and cooking for the past 50 years (they've been in business for much longer), and have in the past few years come to the fore of portable generators, have one-upped the industry with their new Ultimate, developed at their Advanced Products Group here in Boulder, not far from the SOF Editorial Offices.

Compared to the Honda and Yamaha "lightweight portable" generators of similar ilk, Coleman's Ultimate delivers much more than twice the AC watts per pound of either competitor — and more than eight times the DC amps per pound. Cost effective? Less than half the cost per AC watt output, and less than a sixth the cost per amp of the nearest competing 12V battery boost.

Coleman modestly states the heart of their breakthrough system is the dauntless little two-horse, two-stroke Robin engine. The Robin (made by Subaru) is a tough little nut, of course, and is good for 1,000-2,000 hours between rebuilds depending on the use and abuse it receives. But the real breakthrough that produces so much electrical power in such a small package is the leading-edge permanent magnet generator designed by Harold Scott, Coleman's generator wonk.

Its incredible fuel efficiency is due largely to the load-demand governor engineered so electrical response to demand is immediate, even before the engine responds: In other words, the engine surges to accommodate total power demand, but the voltage and cycles of the power delivered remain constant — thus the unit is suitable for rather sensitive electronic devices such as computers, instruments, TVs and the like. (Take note, those who tote tools, toys and high-tech contraptions far from the power grid.) Suitable for nearly any hand-held electrical tool, an Ultimate should be in every emergency-response vehicle or craft.

This contingency-planner's dream tool comes with 8-foot jumper cables, standard grounded 120V receptacles and Coleman's guarantee of complete satisfaction. (Oh, and yes, the microproces-



Ultimate surrounded by tools used for SOF's test: cutoff saw, miter saw, power handsaw, 12V and 110V chainsaws, 4- and 8-inch grinders, 1/2-inch drill and 12/110V TV — plus myriad household appliances not shown. Ultimate grunted to start tools such as cutoff saw that were rated well above its output, but powered them in the cut as long as we did not hog workpiece. (right) Solidly built — plastic only where appropriate — Ultimate's 1,100 watts @ 23 pounds is the leading edge. Small enough to have with you (about 1 cubic foot), big enough to do the job. As good as it gets in this genre.



sor in the Ultimate is safe from the Y2K bug!) Now's the time: Highly recommended.

Distributed directly by: Advanced Products Group, Coleman, Dept. SOF, 2983 Sterling Court, Boulder CO 80301; phone: 303-444-0912; fax: 303-444-1135; on the web: [www.ultimite.com](http://www.ultimite.com); e-mail: [info@advancedproductsgroup.com](mailto:info@advancedproductsgroup.com). —Don McLean

# Michaels' Practical Tactical Bag

A tough, easy-to-carry Tactical Equipment Bag with more than 3 cubic feet of space has been introduced by Michaels of Oregon, known to SOF readers for their Uncle Mike's Sidekick Professional duty gear. We have been using duty holsters and other gear from Michaels since before many of SOF's readers were born, and whether it was for duty, muzzle-loading or hunting it was always gear you could rely on: well-conceived, well-made from quality materials, and well worth the price.

With this confidence in the quality of their product line, we were pleased to see Michaels introduce a line of tough cargo bags eminently suitable for the rigors of stowing and carrying duty and outdoor gear.

For these tasks a bag must be: big enough to be worthwhile, shaped for efficient use and carry, have zippers that absolutely will not let you down, be made from material strong enough to resist abrasion or cuts, and organized for easy access to each of the multitudinous toys you will stow therein without disturbing the rest.

The minutiae of quality design and manufacture, which make such a bag serviceable long after its competitors have been retired as a bag for shop rags, are evident on Uncle Mike's Tactical Equipment Bag. The bag is made from durable, water-repellent 600-denier fabric, with a water-resistant inner coating, and carries the standard Michaels guarantee.

The main compartment is large enough for anything you'd care



to lift — 26x14x10 inches — and its industrial-grade nylon zipper is protected and backed-up by a heavy duty, snap-down storm flap that takes side-strain off the zipper. These snaps are set into nylon-web reinforcement panels so they in turn will not stress the fabric.

Capacious external pockets on three sides leave the back panel flat to be carried at your side, without an exterior pocket disturbing your gait. The front pocket is 22x13x3 inches and the end pockets are 9x11x3 inches each, and all three feature the same industrial-grade zippers.

The bag can be carried either by its tough wrap-around nylon web handles, or by an adjustable strap with movable shoulder pad, which is attached by steel rings to the bag. The Tactical Equipment Bag is more than ample to hold a team member's helmet, boots, vest, fatigues and other associated tac gear. The bag easily holds a full set of equipment needed at the range, or tentage, hammocks, clothing, ammo and other gear for a hunting trip.

The difference between impediment and the useful gear required for your next assignment lies in being able to efficiently stow, carry and access it. Uncle Mike's Tactical Equipment Bag is gear for your gear that's good to go.

Contact Michaels of Oregon, Dept. SOF, 17110 Red Soils Court, Oregon City, OR 97045; phone: 503-655-7964; fax: 503-655-7548; website: [www.sidekick-pro.com](http://www.sidekick-pro.com); e-mail: [info@michaels-oregon.com](mailto:info@michaels-oregon.com). ✕

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# Back To Baghdad

## SOF Treks The Hard Road To Saddam

Text & Photos by  
Mark H. Milstein



AKM 101: At girls school in Baghdad, SOF watched training of respondents to Saddam's call for 3 million Iraqis to resist imminent U.S. invasion. "These women are ready to fight the Americans to the death," SOF was told.

*Baghdad, Iraq* — Although the highway to Baghdad begins just up the street from the ritzy Inter-Continental hotel in Amman, Jordan, the real road to Saddam Hussein's evil empire begins in the first chapter of author William Manchester's book on the Middle Ages, *A World Lit Only By Fire*.

There, Manchester describes how, when cartographers of the age came to the "end of the world as they knew it, they wrote: Beware: Dragons Lurk Beyond Here." Nothing could be closer to the truth for anyone who has ever made the mind-numbing, bribe-demanding, petty-bureaucrat-infested nine-hour drive between the Jordanian capital and Baghdad's Al Rasheed hotel.

It's there, at the Al Rasheed, that those admitted into Saddam's Iraq first come face-to-face with a level of evil-inspired paranoia not seen on this earth anywhere outside of, perhaps, North Korea.

For the Al Rasheed isn't just your average, everyday, run-of-the-mill hotel. And, Iraq, as everyone well knows, isn't your every-day, run-of-the-mill rogue state.

Everyone in Saddam's Iraq is suspect. That goes doubly so for nosey American reporters, who are assumed to be nothing less than Mossad agents with journalism degrees, by the Ministry of Information's minders, and by the Al Rasheed's friendly but intrusive staff of Iraqi secret police.

### Bomb-Damage Assessment

Baghdad, contrary to the wildest wet-dream fantasies of most Americans, is not

some bomb-cratered lunar landscape. Quite the opposite. In the seven days that *SOF* spent in Iraq this spring, we could only count eight or nine buildings that bore any signs of bomb damage.

At first we thought that we hadn't gone to the right part of town. The city was vibrant, shops were filled with food and goods and Iraqis went about their everyday lives like anyone else living in a Middle East dictatorship.

What was wrong with this picture?

Three schools of thought immediately developed: First, the U.S. effort has been negligible. Iraq, after all, is a big country — 169,235 square miles — and we never actually carpet-bombed Baghdad. Second, the bombing has been incredibly precise — so precise that the Pentagon has been able to target single structures and/or barracks for destruction from hundreds of miles away and thus not create huge swaths of rubble. Third, the Iraqis are unbelievably resilient and after every strike work like army ants to reconstruct what has been hit and thus prevent anyone from gauging how much damage has been incurred. Actually, what we realized after much discussion, is that a true sitrep is a combination of all three.

"During the Gulf War the Allies never intended to turn Baghdad into Dresden," a senior Turkish diplomat based in Baghdad told *SOF*. "All of their bombing was done in an effort to blind and cripple the Iraqi army. That doesn't mean bombing food markets, hotels, office blocks or housing estates. That means targeting all things related to either protecting Saddam and his regime, biological or nuclear programs or projecting military force outside Iraqi borders. The same has been true all throughout the decade and even during the most recent bombing."

"Therefore," the Turkish diplomat continued, "Baghdad looks incredibly good considering all of the CNN footage. What doesn't look so good are the old Ministry of Defense headquarters, the *Ba'ath* Party headquarters and selected barracks and bunkers at Republican Guard bases. Also, you must remember, a lot of effort was made by the Pentagon to destroy Saddam's SCUD and SAM missiles. That took a lot of aircraft and smart bombs."

### So, How's Saddam Doing, Anyway?

And what about any movements to snuff out Saddam and his

regime, we asked?

"I'm not going to get into details with you," the Turkish diplomat politely told *SOF*, "but as you know efforts to destabilize the Iraqi government have to date been failures. That's not to say that someone one day won't be successful, but up until now attempts by outside forces to get anyone within the regime to mount a coup have not worked."

Another diplomat, a Swede attached to the United Nations in Baghdad, filled in the blanks for us with a serious backgrounder at the former headquarters of UNSCOM, the suspended UN weapons inspection mission.

"Early last year Saddam divided the country into four military regions," the Swedish diplomat explained to *SOF*. "It was done, as we now know, to create the opportunity for a safe haven for him and his regime if there was a coup. The logic went like this: If there was a plan to overthrow him, and one or more Iraqi armies supported the mutineers, then Saddam would have a safe place to fight back from."

"That was something he had not even done during the Gulf War," the Swede continued. "I heard that the Americans had brought



(above) While women trained at the girls school, Muhammed al-Quixote and Pancho train at near-by soccer field. Power pylon in background does not mount windmill. (right) Some 300 or so militiamen between 18 and 45 showed up to receive small arms training, but with only one rifle for each 40 or so trainees they spent much time learning to march.

Training with a shared rifle, women learned disassembly and (right) marching, interspersed with some cheer leading: "Death to President Clinton," one woman yelled. "Death to America." *SOF* was told these women were the vanguard against any U.S. attack against Iraq. "They can, and will, fight to protect their homes." One woman said she couldn't wait to kill her first American soldier — we hope she doesn't have to go to Kosovo to do it.





Such trainees are about as credible a response, as was credible the threat of an imminent invasion — but, like saving gum wrappers to build B-29s, it keeps the folks involved in the war effort. (right) Iraqi army anti-aircraft gun positions, clearly visible from highway, were placed atop 60-foot-tall mounds of dirt, as were nearby radar or command and control trucks. (below) Maximum leader, as shown in omnipresent representations of varying extravagance, is always there to save the people from the threat of a U.S. invasion.



a lot of A-10s into the region last December just prior to Desert Fox because they had word that some officers with the Iraqi Third Army Corps in Basra were prepared to move on Saddam. The A-10s were going to then act as air cover and support for the tanks as they went to Baghdad. It never worked because, as we later heard, Saddam found out about the coup attempt and had the officers executed.”

While all the talk of toppling Saddam seems to focus on groups of army officers or Iraqi ex-patriots on CIA stipend, one of the most overlooked possibilities is actually home-grown and entirely grassroots — the *Shi'ite* Muslim community.

### The Shi'ite Factor

Shi'ite Muslims comprise about 65% of Iraq's 22 million people. The ruling elite of Iraq, however, is almost entirely made up of the minority Sunni Muslims. Shi'ites are also the majority in neighboring Iran, which fought an eight-year war with Iraq.

The mere mentioning of possible *Shia* unrest makes the Iraqi regime quake. Shi'ite clerics who have voiced their concern over the present situation in Iraq have been dealt with accordingly. In February, just prior to *SOF's* arrival in Iraq, the supreme religious leader of Iraq's Shi'ite Muslim community



was killed in a drive-by shooting after giving a fiery sermon in the city of Najaf.

A number of Iraqis told *SOF* that the killing of Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sader triggered violent civil unrest in a low-income Shi'ite suburb of Baghdad and in other cities, but our minder and others attached to the government strongly denied there were any disturbances.

"You can see for yourself," Kareem, our minder, told us as our white Chevy Caprice sped down the road towards Karbala, another Iraqi city reported to have been recently rocked by Shi'ite unrest, "everything is peaceful. There are no problems."

No problems, maybe, but along the way we passed three Iraqi SAM batteries in empty fields just off the main road and adjacent to residential areas teeming with civilians. All three batteries were identical, and contained a command and control truck, three launch carriages with four missiles and what appeared to be a wide-array radar truck. We also passed through a number of checkpoints

## Follow The Maximum Leader: People's Jihad

That night we grabbed dinner in an up scale Baghdad neighborhood called Mansour. Kareem surprised us by pointing out a corner ice-cream shop where in January 1996 Saddam's son, Uday, was severely injured in an assassination attempt which left him a cripple, and meaner than ever. While word at the time characterized it as a CIA hit, later investigation revealed the shooters were rival Iraqi *mafiosi* who had it in for Uday for supposedly welshing on a lucrative smuggling deal.

The next morning's headlines brought a smile to our face: Once again Saddam Hussein had called on the Iraqi people to mount a "people's jihad" against the Americans. Iraqi TV and radio had called for the mobilization of upwards of 3 million citizens to form a people's army to fight off an "imminent attack" by U.S.-led forces.

Although neither the BBC, CNN or AP were reporting any further U.S. buildup in the Gulf, the government continued to insist that millions of Iraqis needed to go immediately to their local Ba'ath Party civilian militia office, register and report to their local training site.

Kareem, who comes from a decidedly impoverished part of Baghdad called Adora, said we would go to his neighborhood to observe how average Iraqis would fight to protect Saddam Hussein from the Americans.

We were psyched, and an hour later found ourselves driving down a pot-hole choked street of average looking single-family houses asking anyone who passed us if they knew where the



For a tile representation of President Bush, however, one must go to an international hotel. President Clinton is yet to appear in tile or stone, thus far only in chant and song. (right) Saddam has enough palaces to exhaust the present supply of cruise missiles.

manned by well-equipped Republican Guard troops who weren't in the neighborhood to check for drunken drivers or to make sure everyone had their safety belt fastened.

Iraqi army anti-aircraft gun positions were clearly visible from the highway in at least three locations during our trip. Each of the guns were placed on 60-foot-tall mounds of dirt, as were nearby radar or command and control trucks.

Karbala was quiet when we finally arrived an hour later. Services were just beginning at the Abbas Mosque, and dozens of not-so-undercover Iraqi policemen mingled freely in the growing crowd of Shia that had come to pray. Six well-armed Iraqi soldiers also made their way into the courtyard of the blue-tiled mosque, taking up positions near the entrance gates and in the center courtyard.

Things were getting tense, and Kareem suggested we speak with the chief cleric of the mosque, an Iraqi stooge with only good things to say about the situation and the regime. We were not permitted to photograph any of the three funerals which were in progress in the mosque during our stay.

Without the ability to speak Arabic we were at the mercy of Kareem and whatever talking head he could dredge up for us to speak with. It didn't take long to realize it would be impossible to ask anyone attending the service whether or not they witnessed last month's riots or knew of anyone who had been killed by Iraqi security forces.

It was time to quit Karbala and return to Baghdad.



training grounds were.

No one did, but one young man pointed us in the direction of the local Ba'ath Party office and soon we were on our way with Commander Kadum Ajil, the local civilian militia commander, to a local girl's school and soccer field.

"These women are ready to fight the Americans to the death," Ajil told us, as we peered into a school gymnasium filled with *chador*-cloaked women standing in a circle around a pot-bellied, gray-haired Iraqi army drill instructor.

"Death to President Clinton!" one woman yelled. "Death to America."

All of the women then chanted the same back in unison. "Viva!" they yelled.

Trying our hardest to stifle a laugh, we watched as the drill instructor showed the women his single Iraqi-made Kalashnikov rifle and explained how it worked.

## Homemaker Guard

The women looked on, and after about 10 minutes he called on one of the women to come forward and dismantle the rifle for the visiting American journalists.

A rather large woman in *chador* came forward and with a

*Continued on page 68*

# R

icco bounded up the steps and turned the corner, his UZI at high port, while his partner, Peter, followed close behind with an R5 assault rifle at the ready. I followed them both through the door, forgetting for a sec that I was holding a 35mm Canon camera — not a .357 Magnum. My first thought was, “I should have stayed in the car.” This wasn’t what I expected, this was “shots fired, house under attack”; the only thing worse would be “officer down.” I hoped not, since I didn’t have a radio either.

With the sticker price on many luxury automobiles skyrocketing beyond the price of some modest homes, cars have always been a valuable commodity. This is especially true in the Third World, where few average citizens own cars. For most people, their vehicle is their most valuable material possession next to the family home. Horse thieves quickly became a thing of the past when the first production automobile was pushed out the factory door. No matter, they were replaced by modern counterparts. For many young criminals in the United States and Europe, “grand theft auto” is practically a rite of passage. Improvements in alarm systems and anti-theft devices have made car theft the bailiwick of professionals.

Armed robbery of a motor vehicle (a.k.a. carjacking or auto hijacking) is prevalent in South Africa, where a popular metro area bumper sticker declares “This car already stolen.”

In Johannesburg, gangs of Kalashnikov-wielding highwaymen relieve their fellow South Africans of on average 10 cars a day. Why toil for a living? It’s much easier for the unsophisticated, lazy armed criminal to simply hijack a car at gunpoint. Most hijackers are black African males 16 to 22 years of age who grew up in a culture of teeming violence. Unfortunately, after a perpetrator threatens the victim with a firearm, he’s reached the point of no return and figures he might as well shoot the victim to prevent identification. In one Jo’burg incident, a woman was killed in her driveway — in view of her 10-year-old-daughter.

### BMW To The Rescue

Faced with an overwhelming problem and limited resources, the South African Police Service (SAPS) appealed for help. BMW quickly donated 100 cars to the province’s highway patrol. Forced to find easier pickings in less dangerous environs, the thieves and their hijacking escapades soon spread to nearby KwaZulu Natal Province and the seaside city of Durban, a seaport, tourist destination, and site of the Dunston 500 Surfer Competition, a 30-year-old annual event. Only three highways exit Durban, which gives car hijackers easy options.

The Durban PD needed help combating car thieves, so the KwaZulu Natal Anti-Hijacking Unit (AHU) was formed in 1997 as part of a local business initiative. In a partnership formed between the local business community and KwaZulu Natal, SAPS, an organization of donors from Durban, sponsored the unit, “Business Against Crime,” to which sponsors donated cars, equipment and resources to augment SAPS’ austere budget. Twelve BMW 328is were provided the SAPS in Durban and SAPS headquarters tossed away several chapters of “the book” which granted the unit additional leeway to exercise their own judgment and initiative in solving the problem. The orders were clear: “Get the job done.”

SAPS required special training for officers to be assigned to the Durban AHU: SWAT course, driving course, Tracker system training and bomb disposal. There were about 2,000 volunteers for the new unit, but only 70 were selected for the training course — of whom 64 finished. The driving course, however, weeded out a few more.

The unit commander is SAPS Superintendent Martin Vermaak, 37, a former instructor at the National Police Academy, in Pretoria. Well-respected by his men, Vermaak underwent the required training along with them, establishing an important bond for a leader, and he continues to set the example.

The unit currently operates with 44 men assigned. Within a month the unit had recovered more than 100 stolen or hijacked vehicles. The criminals, though, were prepared to fight back, and not with nickel-and-dime hardware. SAPS intelligence seized several RPG7s in Umlazi, a violent crime-soaked township outside Durban, from criminals sent from Johannesburg to blow up AHU cars and kill SAPS officers. The AHU was obviously putting a dent in the stolen car business in nearby Gauteng Province, where vehicles



stolen in Durban are usually sold. The unit continues to rack up impressive crime-busting statistics: In a one-year period the unit investigated 10,118 complaints, made 517 arrests, recovered 1,234 motor vehicles (632 hijacked and 602 stolen), confiscated 17 illegal weapons, and rendered 1,573 assists to distressed motorists.

Although the AHU’s main focus is on anti-hijacking, they will respond to any criminal act or provide back-up to other units when requested. They often find themselves rolling to assist with the frequent armed robbery calls when they’re in close proximity.

Apprehending armed robbers and their getaway vehicles usually results in a recovered stolen vehicle. According to Superintendent Vermaak, “A lot of cars that are hijacked are used in armed robberies two or three days later. They may have different number plates, but

# ROAD WARRIORS

## All Revved Up And Nowhere To Go

Text & Photos by Rob Krott



they're always stolen."

"Steve," a friend in the South African National Defense Forces (SANDF), had arranged for me to spend a day on patrol with two AHU officers. As I left SAPS Superintendent Vermaak's office he said, "Here, put these on," and handed us two SAPS-issue Kevlar vests. Outside in the parking lot we were introduced to Constable Ricco Luzzi, 23, and Constable Peter Van der Merwe, 24. We would ride with them on their 12-hour shift, chasing bad guys, running down stolen cars, assisting motorists with breakdowns, and likely getting "revved up" (shot at).

I was very thankful for the vest.

### This Unit Is STRAC

Luzzi and Van der Merwe were well-turned-out in brightly polished boots, pressed uniforms and orderly gear. Marking them as cops were their Terminator-style sunglasses, crewcuts and athletic builds. Both are athletes, yet both smoked a good quantity of cigarettes during their shift — no doubt an occupational hazard. While Ricco, from the Durban area, may look like he spends his Saturdays in the scrum, he's actually an accomplished tennis player. Peter was the dedicated rugby player. Ricco was interested in becoming a cop in the U.S., having received unsolicited offers

(top, left) Constable Ricco Luzzi with cuffed suspected carjacker. South Africa no longer is peaceful. (left) A BMW 328i high-performance sports coupe, courtesy of Dunlop, ready to rock & roll with KwaZulu Natal Anti-Hijack Unit. Free promo, you bet, but if lives are saved, what the hell? (above) Ever-wary Constable Peter Van der Merwe, KwaZulu Natal AHU, in an overwatch position, his R5 assault rifle ready to take down suspects if they show lethal intent.

from several departments.

AHU constables work four days on and four days off in 12-hour shifts. As we got acquainted they checked out their car, inspected their gear and loaded weapons. AHU-issue weapons are two UZI 9mm sub-machine guns, two Vektor 5.56x45mm R5 assault rifles, and two Vektor 9mm Z88s (a Beretta copy). Drivers keep an UZI close at hand, while the "shotgun" keeps his 5.56x45mm R5 assault rifle locked and loaded, the barrel resting on the windowsill, and retaining an additional 30-round magazine in his lap. "This was," I told them, "extremely cool." And I wasn't the only one pumped. Steve looked at me and it was obvious the SANDF combat veteran, playing hooky from his office job to escort me around, was anxious for a little action himself. He grinned and said, "Hell, yes, and a boot full of ammo!"

Ricco and Peter promised, "If you ride with us for two or three days we guarantee you'll get revved up."

At 0900 we were on patrol searching for a hijacked white Toyota Hilux pick-up. As we motored through Durban's townships I quizzed them about duty with the AHU. Two weeks prior they'd been involved in a shootout where armed robbers held a family hostage. They killed one robber and wounded the other two.

"Are you in a lot of shootouts?"

"Well, we try." Laughs.

### Equal Opportunity Weapons

"So, what's the most commonly used weapon?" I asked.

"Anything ... pistols ... sawed-off shotguns ... you name it. We get a lot of AK47s smuggled in from Mozambique. They go for about 10 Rand each [\$3 U.S.] up there. There's a large cache of weapons in Mozambique. Many are in poor condition, but they can sell them down here for 500 to 1,500 Rand apiece."

That's a huge profit margin by anybody's arithmetic, and to the downtrodden poor of the new (and dangerous) South Africa, it's as enticing as a crack bag in Compton.

The neighborhoods the SAPS patrol are similar — neighborhoods remarkable only for their swelling statistics of domestic disturbances, drunkenness, drugs, stabbings ... and shootings. When the World Cup was on television there were a lot of "yippee" shooters (*Brrrrup*. "Yippee!") "Every black male with a weapon would go outside and shoot it off." Kalashnikovs are quite obviously illegal but in this environment to have only six weapons in the car you might find yourself outgunned.

Often high on drugs like mandrax, the jackers will go toe-to-toe in firefights with the SAPS. One thief was hit 13 times with 9mm and armor-piercing 5.56x45mm rounds, yet continued to run.

After checking out the weapons, we buckled ourselves in for our 12-hour shift. Ricco and Peter's vehicle, Number 11, was one of the 12 donated by Durban businessmen. The 12 BMW 328is, however, were quickly whittled down to 10, when two were badly damaged in high-speed pursuits. This type of duty is hard on vehicles to begin with, but when you factor in high-

speed pursuits through AK-plentiful townships and the resulting exposure to automatic small-arms fire, it's doubtful whether BMW's wheel-to-wheel warranty applies.

I was instantly impressed with these cars and their ancillary equipment; each vehicle is equipped with a LoJack Tracker system. I saw the system in action and was very surprised how quickly we could vector in on a vehicle, even among the winding dirt roads of the townships' hillside shantytowns.

The LoJack Tracker system has led SAPS to several "chop-shops," where stolen vehicles are dismantled for parts. Vehicles are worth more when sold as repair parts, which are nearly impossible to trace. A stolen car can be stripped in less than an hour and its chassis left to rust in a grassy lot in the townships. Besides the standard vehicle police-band radio and mobile units, the cars are equipped with cell phones, of great use to the unit officers for tactical conversations because of the distinct possibility that the "bad guys" also have police radios.

Most of the cars are emblazoned with the sponsor's business logo, making them look not unlike sporty Euro-versions of NASCAR racers. Ours said "Sponsored by Dunlop" so we had no tire problems on this baby! The five-speed 328is go through a lot of clutches and brakes but the officers consider them excellent duty vehicles. They average 500km a day, mostly tough driving through townships and over bad dirt roads, patrols often interspersed with white-knuckle high-speed highway chases.

When I casually joked, "So, do you guys pick up a lot of girls with this car?" they



KwaZulu Natal AHU officers (above) check stolen vehicle for VIN. Officers can't afford mental lapses since hostile fire is, sadly, an all-too-common occurrence. (right) Constable Peter Van der Merwe, KwaZulu Natal AHU, kneels in overwatch position with his R5 assault rifle. Note ballistic vest with equipment pockets and 9mm pistol in chest-mounted holster. Often, he with the most "toys" — wins.

(right) A SAPS Durban Flying Squad constable overwatches AHU officers checking out a suspected chop shop. Note the abandoned cars perched on the disassembly line for parts.



laughed. "Well, when you ask them to get in, they don't really have a choice!"

0930: We didn't pick up any girls, but did pick up a Tracker signal and called in to confirm whether the car remained on stolen status. It had, however, been recovered the day before.

We continued to troll around Kwa-Mashu township looking for trouble. Finding none, we then cruised over to Umlazi township, where there's an abundance.

We stopped at the headquarters of a 250-man task force busy conducting Operation *Lungisa* (a native word meaning "put things right") in Umlazi's Glebelands Hostels, government-subsidized housing. In the six months prior to my visit there were 56 known homicides in the hostels; still a surprising amount even when you take into account that there are between 20,000 to 30,000 people living in these buildings. In the past two weeks a spate of nearly two dozen brutal killings had prompted the joint army and police operation. The nearby police station at Umlazi had been attacked recently for its weapons. Two SAPS officers were wounded but the attackers were unable to break into the armory. We received a quick situation briefing and were soon on our way.

Next stop was a suspected chop-shop. Stolen vehicles are sometimes dismantled at otherwise "legitimate" car repair businesses so the AHU keeps a list of the more suspicious locations. Vehicles were checked for their vehicle identification numbers (VINs).

After chatting with some of the locals in hopes of picking up a tip or two, AHU

Africa is dealing with an increase in police corruption resulting from an influx of new officers, the poor economy and even poorer wages. Pay for a constable is about U.S. \$330 dollars per month, so a new BMW parked in a township police station parking lot would attract attention. One such vehicle was used to carry out a 4-million-Rand armored car heist. The perps, three dirty Chatsworth Field Unit Police officers, hailed from the predominately Indian residential area of Chatsworth. Word on the street i.d.'d them shortly after the robbery.

Last summer after a bank van robbery, a SAPS inspector, Selale Hendrick Maloma, was arrested at his home in possession of several AK47s and R 10,000 still in the bank wrappers.

Cruising downtown, we stopped at the beach for a scenic spot of lunch. Sandwiches were unwrapped and while I was sipping from a bottle of water, Ricco and Peter continued to brief us on their duties. It was nearly noon. We'd only been with Ricco and Peter three hours and it already seemed like a full day. "Usually by 12 we have a good six or eight hijacks," said Ricco.

But by noon, our sandwiches' remains

quickly explained as backup consisting of three heavily armed officers from the Durban Flying Squad arrived on the scene.

A punk had been slapping around his girlfriend while the three adult males in the family waffled about staring at their toes. The mother phoned the cops.

It was a slow day — nobody had shot a bad guy yet. The "overkill" reporting of a shooting and melodramatic "house under attack" was done to ensure a speedy police response. The response was speedy all right: The SAPS mobile data system guarantees the dispatch response time in a measly four seconds (try to match that in New York City — or any other American burg). Unfortunately, this call took two elite unit patrol cars off the street for a penny-ante domestic squabble. The Flying Squad sergeant gave the offender a stern ass-chewing and a cuff on the ear as he yelled, "Get out of here!" Problem solved. Back to business.

Number 11 was again on the prowl for stolen cars and I was getting an education: No specific vehicle is targeted by the car hijackers, though BMW and Mercedes sedans are popular choices for the 200-500

(right) Constable Ricco Luzzi (left) and Constable Peter Van der Merwe "take a door" in Kwa-Mashu township in response to a "house under attack" call. You never know what awaits on the other side. (inset) Pan-African Congress graffiti hate message, "One Settler, One Bullet," refers to white South Africans. An *Okapi* is a bush-knife. Gentle folk, these murderous anarchists.



Number 11 was back on the road. Two suspect vehicles were stopped, VIN and driver identity checks made.

Every time a stop was made, Peter scrambled out and took up an overwatch position with his R5. Ricco usually carried his UZI held casually in his hand by the pistol grip and pointed down. It's not uncommon for the AHU to take rounds from suspects — or from surrounding houses. A technique I noticed among SAPS officers was placing their unholstered pistol on top of the car or another flat surface, ensuring it was immediately at hand if they were otherwise busy using their hands.

1130: A late-model Mazda four-door was parked outside the Umlazi police station; the attached stolen plates and VIN did not match. The SAPS experienced a public relations problem in the townships after black SAPS constables were caught driving stolen cars. Under the new post-apartheid regime, South

hurriedly tossed in the garbage, we were in a high-speed pursuit, adrenaline pumping and tires squealing through hairpin curves, with Ricco pushing the Beemer above 200 kilometers (125 mph) an hour. Our stolen-vehicle prey finally was apprehended by another unit and Ricco downshifted, our mode returning to normal patrol duty.

Moments later, we received a panicked call of "Shots fired, house under attack!" and ordered to an address in Kwa-Mashu township. With the siren screaming and lights twirling, we were caught up in another adrenaline rush. Ricco and Peter piled out and quickly conferred with the woman who had phoned in. They ran toward the house and, armed with their mainstay weapons — the UZI and R5 — they made a tactical entry, cleared the house and exited the rear. There, in the backyard was a wailing 17-year-old female, a man of about 20, and three other adult males. The situation was

cars hijacked or stolen countrywide every month. The two most common vehicles in South Africa, Toyota Hilux trucks and mini-buses, are also stolen in significant numbers.

That afternoon we spotted a stolen vehicle and gave chase, weaving through the heavy workday traffic. Pulling the car over, Ricco and Peter checked out the vehicle, handcuffed the two male suspects and told their irate girlfriends they'd have to find another lift home. When we drove off with the suspects and the recovered vehicle on our way to AHU headquarters, the young ladies were standing abandoned and unloved alongside the road.

They were hardly happy, but that's what you get for hanging out with carjackers in KwaZulu Natal.

Rob Krott is an SOF Senior Foreign Correspondent. ✎



# Serb Threat ASSESSMENT

**N**ot long after NATO began bombing Yugoslavia, President Clinton said he would consider using ground troops in a permissive environment in Kosovo. During Operation Desert Storm, properly employed air power created a permissive environment in which coalition ground troops took control of Iraq in a matter of days while suffering very few casualties.

Compared to Desert Storm, the efficacy of air power in Serbia is somewhat limited by the NATO committees doing the target selection. American pilots flying sorties call the targeting horrible — and worse — but the bombing has been fairly effective.

Both military targets and infrastructure have been destroyed with minimal collateral damage and (to date) without losing a single NATO pilot (although the technological intelligence coup of downing the F-117A Stealth will be of strong benefit to the Serbs and Russians). More than that, Milosevic began to show signs of cracking after two weeks, and his troops in Kosovo proper have been made to keep their heads underground for much of the time they would have been otherwise involved in murder and rape.

With A-10s flying during daylight, F15Es taking out any radar and anti-aircraft sites and AH64 Apache helicopters working at night and during bad weather, nearly every road in Kosovo can be denied to the Serbs. They can't roll a marble down the highway, let alone a tank. Air power can't be used to secure real estate but it can certainly be used to deny the Serbs the ability to move. That, by definition, is a permissive environment quite similar to the one in which the Iraqi legions were surrendering by the thousands in their jockey shorts.

It is unfortunate that every time the idea of inserting U.S. ground troops into harm's way is discussed, the ghosts of Vietnam miraculously occupy policy rooms in Washington. When the necessity of taking action in Bosnia first surfaced in 1992, the Pentagon, remembering the roads outside Saigon, said it would take 300,000 troops merely to secure a road between Sarajevo and the Dalmatian coast. And of course the hand-wringers and columnists always fill white space repeating the dangers of bogging down in a Vietnam-like quagmire.

## **Propaganda vs. Reality**

The only real similarity Kosovo has to Vietnam is that propaganda has too often been substituted for reality by people who don't seem to be particularly concerned with either veracity or historical facts. Perhaps the most egregious trifling with truth has to do with restating as fact the hero mythology authored by the Yugo communist party regarding the partisan movement. During Bosnia, Lord David Owen tried to frighten us by contending that Yugoslav guerrillas had tied down 16 Nazi divisions. The

# What Will NATO Face On The Ground?

by John Hogan

truth is the *Wehrmacht* conquered Yugoslavia in six days during 1941. The partisans did harass the railroads, but other than that, Yugoslav guerrilla groups spent most of their time fighting each other. The Chetniks were allied with the Axis and when Tito couldn't do the same, his group had to spend most of his time running. Despite the fact that all of the Nazi divisions in Yugoslavia save one were comprised of third-echelon old men and boys, the guerrillas had little impact on them until very late in the war. After the Nazi surrender in Europe, Tito's partisans murdered more than half a million Germans and their Yugo allies who had surrendered Bleiburg, Austria and Trieste, Italy.

Perhaps it is the traditional Serbian view of warfare as a mixture of knife and axe work mixed with village sieges and artillery fire that has caused their reputations as bad asses and frightened the deskbound paper-shufflers at the Pentagon. A closer look at one of the basic truths of guerrilla war may provide some answers. Guerrillas are the fish and the people are the water, as Mao noted. Unless guerrillas have the support of the population, they have no place to hide. A Serbian guerrilla movement in Kosovo would be eaten alive by the ethnic Albanian majority.

Discounting the aggravated communist hero-of-the-republic stuff, ethnically based murder was the only aspect of partisan style warfare the Yugoslav Army carried over from WWII during the conflict of 1991-1995. Moreover, no guerrilla-style actions have ever been conducted against our troops occupying Bosnia.

Despite woeful Pentagon predictions, the Yugoslav Army has proven itself to be a remarkably backward, badly trained and ill-equipped, fourth-rate military structure. But make no mistake: They can be vicious if they have women and children cornered. Both the current and past chiefs of staff and ministers of defense of the Yugoslav army have been indicted for war crimes. But during eight years of Balkan conflicts, neither the Serb-controlled Yugoslav Army nor its successor has shown any real talent for toe-to-toe combat.

During the battle of Vukovar, in 1991, a force of 2,000 Croatian farmers armed with small arms kept nearly one-quarter of the entire mechanized Yugoslav army tied down for almost three months. Again, in the fall

*Continued on page 71*

AP/Wide World



Yugoslav M-84 is a variant of the Russian T-72. Proven effective against unarmed civilians, it will not do well against U.S. A-10 Warthogs or AH-64 Apache gunships. (above) Serb policemen clash with ethnic Albanian rebels of KLA in the village of Bukos. It is unfortunate that every time the idea of inserting U.S. ground troops into harm's way is discussed, the ghosts of Vietnam miraculously occupy policy rooms in Washington.

# Americans Join The KLA

## Volunteers For "Atlantic Brigade"

by John Hogan



Illyria

AP/Wide World



More than 100 ethnic Albanian volunteers, outfitted by a Bronx, NY, surplus store, arrived 17 April in Albania with a desire to help the Kosovo Liberation Army kill Serbs. Elinda Muriqi, 16 (above), plays tight end on her high school football team. She gave up the prom this year for a trip to Albania, where she told reporters she had arrived in a mood to kill.

about doing something for their fellows. The New York Albanian community, of about 250,000, is the nation's largest. About 70 percent migrated from Kosovo. Most volunteers have family members directly affected by the genocide that's been euphemistically sterilized as "ethnic cleansing."

Volunteer Adem Krasniqi, 26, is a veteran of the fighting in disintegrating Yugoslavia. He fought with the Serbs against Croatia while serving with a Yugoslav Army artillery unit. He deserted, as did vast numbers of enlisted people and NCOs from the combat units, when it became clear that the Serbs' objective was ethnic cleansing. Several volunteers, such as Brahim Ukaj, have parents or siblings in Kosovo they have not heard from since ethnic cleansing intensified several weeks ago.

Few women are among the first group of 100, and Muriqi is the only girl. Although she'd never seen combat before leaving for Kosovo, Muriqi was no pampered princess. Rather, she was a tight end on her Bronx high school football team. Her whole family is tough. Her brother, Elvir, is a well-known kick-boxer. Wearing a KLA insignia at the Tirana Airport, Muriqi told members of the press she was there to kill.

An official of the Kosovo provisional government was on hand to swear in the volunteers. In his speech to the volunteers and their families he described KLA as the defender of Albanian honor — a force that would help ensure the freedom and independence of Kosovo. For Muriqi, that's a bit more exciting than the prom.

*John Hogan is a senior SOF correspondent who served with the Army's First Infantry Division in Vietnam. Those interested in more information regarding efforts to aid the cause in Kosovo may contact the Kosovo Relief Project at 212-753-2200. ☒*

As her classmates primped for the prom, 16-year-old Elinda Muriqi prepared to kill Serbs. A New Yorker of Albanian descent, Muriqi could no longer live the life of a carefree American teenager while distant relatives suffered genocide in Kosovo.

So she gave up lipstick and toenail polish for cammies and combat boots and joined the "Atlantic Brigade," a group of nearly 400 volunteers of Albanian extraction from the United States and Canada who hope to replenish the battle-depleted ranks of the Kosovo Liberation Army. They're a small part of a worldwide wave of volunteers emerging from Albanian expatriate communities who want to join the KLA in its last-ditch resistance to Serb ethnic cleansing. But the Serbs also have volunteers waiting in the wings. In the former Soviet Union, Russians are standing in long lines to volunteer for any future effort to fight on behalf of their Serbian brethren.

Muriqi and about 100 other volunteers — outfitted in camouflage and web gear from a Bronx surplus store — landed 17 April in Tirana, Albania, on their way to Kosovo. At press time, another 300 volunteers were still awaiting permission to fly through NATO-controlled airspace into Albania. The aircraft, chartered by the Albanian American Community, had authorization for a brief time to enter the airspace over the Albanian capital of Tirana.

NATO authorization to land in Tirana

was withdrawn about an hour after it was given. The Albanian community speculates the U.S. State Department may have pulled strings. An Albanian community leader said it was far easier for the State Department to get NATO to delay the flight than to act overtly and take political heat for the delay. Officials at the State Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service have said there are no specific prohibitions against the volunteers going to Albania, but the mission might raise legal questions later. Certainly opponents of the U.S.-led NATO air strikes will find ways of objecting.

The lead element of the KLA's "Atlantic Brigade" may have done an end run around NATO by using a different aircraft than the one being watched by authorities at JFK Airport. They flew out of Newark International to Rome. When no objections were raised to a new flight plan to Tirana and Rome, the first 100 volunteers managed to slip in. Landing immediately behind them was an aircraft containing 21 members of Congress.

Before takeoff, the Albanian volunteers — most with no military experience — lined up at a military surplus outlet to be fitted with brand new woodland camouflage uniforms and web gear. On the left shoulder of the shirts they sewed an American flag above the red and black double eagle insignia of the KLA. None of the 300 has had any experience fighting Serbs, but all are enthusiastic

# Timeline To War

## 1999

### April

NATO bombardment continues, as Russian warship heads for Mediterranean.

- Three captured U.S. soldiers shown on Serbian TV, facing charges by Yugoslav military court.



SOF files

### March

Thousands of refugees flood into Albania, telling of door-to-door raids, looting and burning by Serbs.

- NATO airstrikes begin.
- U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke warns Milosevic of airstrikes unless he signs peace agreement calling for interim autonomy and 28,000 NATO troops to implement it. Milosevic refuses.

### February-March

Yugoslav forces sweep through Macedonian border region, digging in opposite NATO forces. Rebels launch attacks on Serbs.

### January

45 ethnic Albanians slain outside Racak, spurring international peace efforts.

## 1998

### October

Massacres are discovered in Kosovo that point to continued Serbian aggression against Albanian civilians, despite Serbian assurances that offensive is over.



Mark H. Milstein

### September

Serbian army continues to attack villages in Drenica region of Kosovo.

United Nations Security Council votes in favor of resolution calling for ceasefire in Kosovo, and warning Yugoslav government of "additional measures" if it fails to comply.

NATO takes first formal steps toward military intervention in Kosovo. Serbian Prime Minister Mirko Marjanovic announces defeat of Albanian separatists and withdrawal of government forces from Kosovo.

### August

Massive month-long offensive severely weakens KLA until a significant stronghold — the village of Junik — falls into Serb hands on the 16th of the month. UN called for cease-fire.

### July

France and Britain draft UN Security Council resolution to try to bring about a ceasefire.

### June

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan warned Nato that it must seek Security Council mandate for any military intervention in the Serbian province.

### May

U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke begins round of shuttle diplomacy which results in Yugoslav President Milosevic inviting Ibrahim Rugova for peace talks.

Ethnic Albanian and Serb negotiators start talks in Pristina as fighting continues.

### March-April

Intermittent clashes continue. Facing mounting international pressure and threat of sanctions, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic proposes talks that he says could lead to broad autonomy. Albanian leaders refuse, insisting on foreign mediation and, ultimately, independence. 95% of Serbs vote against international intervention in Kosovo, in a referendum.

Serbian and Albanian leaders agree to get Kosovar Albanians into Kosovo's state schools and universities after seven-year boycott, but hard-line Serb university lecturers reject the deal.

UN Security Council votes 14-0 to impose arms embargo on Yugoslavia to force peaceful settlement. Yugoslavia is called upon to meet conditions that include: beginning substantive dialogue with Kosovar Albanians; withdrawing special police units that spearheaded the recent crackdown; and allowing access to Kosovo by humanitarian organizations. Resolution also calls for action to prevent "terrorist activities" in Kosovo.

Yugoslavia rejects U.N. embargo as "unfounded" and unacceptable interference in its affairs.

Kosovar Albanian separatist leader Ibrahim Rugova rejects Serbian plans to hold referendum on foreign mediation in Kosova crisis, accusing Serbs of defying the international community.

Bodies of six men are found by the side of a road near Orahovac in southwest Kosova. Reports of mass graves surface.

Serbia amends a referendum law to allow vote to be held on foreign mediation in Kosova before a Big Power deadline expires. Albanian separatists reject referendum proposal, boycotting peace talks with Serbia. Serbia hardens its stance against foreign mediation.

### February-March

Police crackdown on Kosovar Albanians leaves some 80 people dead. Gun battles leave 16 Albanians and four police dead.

Tens of thousands protest in the Kosova capital, Pristina, against the violence, and street clashes erupt.

U.S. special envoy Robert Gelbard accuses Serbian government of using "brutal, disproportionate and overwhelming" force against Albanians in Kosova. He urges Belgrade to find political solution through dialogue.

Serbs insist that Kosova Albanian leaders publicly renounce "terrorism and secession" before talks with Serbia can begin.

Foreign powers touring the region witness heightened tensions and fear a new Balkan war. Six foreign powers agree on sanctions — and threaten more — to halt what they condemn as Serbian police brutality.

Milosevic agrees to withdraw special police units from Kosova, but U.S. and four European powers insist on UN arms embargo. Russia opposes the measure.

Heavily armed Serbian police and army groups surround and attack village of Prekaz, which they identify as a stronghold of Kosova's militant separatists.

### January

A Kosovar Serb politician is killed in apparent retaliation for a police action 24 hours earlier in which a Kosovar Albanian was reported killed.

## 1997

### March

Four people injured when bomb explodes in center of Pristina.

State prosecutor charges 18 alleged members of illegal "National Movement for the Liberation of Kosova" with terrorism offenses.

Within weeks, at least 26 Kosovar Albanians are arrested in a series of police raids, and a suspected leader of outlawed Liberation Army of Kosova is killed in gun battle with police.

### January

Serb ultra-nationalist rector of Pristina University is badly injured by car bomb.

## 1996

Serbia signs deal with Kosovar Albanian leaders to return Albanian students to mainstream education after they were forcefully removed from their schools in Albanian language. This deal was never implemented.

Separatists claim to have shot down Yugoslav Airlines training aircraft.

A Serbian court sentences 17 Kosovar Albanians to total of 186 years in jail on terrorism charges.

## 1995

### August

Serbian authorities settle several hundred Croatian Serb refugees in Kosova, drawing protests from Kosovar Albanian leaders.

### July

A Serbian court sentences 68 Kosovar Albanians to up to eight years in prison for allegedly setting up a parallel police force.

## 1993

Police arrest more than 30 Kosovar Albanians on suspicion of preparing an armed uprising.

## 1992

### October

Serb and Kosovar Albanian leaders in Kosova hold face-to-face peace talks for first time in three years.



Mark H. Milstein

## May

Writer Ibrahim Rugova is elected president of self-proclaimed republic after election held in defiance of Serbian authorities.

## 1991

Bosnian war begins.

Albania's parliament recognizes Kosova as an independent republic.

## 1990

### July

Kosovar Albanian legislators in the province declare independence. Serbia dissolves the Kosova assembly. Strikes and protests continue.



Mark H. Milstein

### February

Yugoslavia sends troops, tanks, warplanes and 2,000 more police to Kosova.

By month's end, more than 20 people have been killed and a curfew imposed.

### January

Police use tear gas, truncheons and water cannon on thousands of Kosovar Albanian demonstrators.

Unrest escalates and on 28 January police shoot dead at least 10.

## 1989

Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic takes away Kosova's autonomy.

Street violence erupts when Kosova assembly approves the measure.

More than 20 people are killed and scores arrested when violence escalates to gun battles.

## 1988

More than 6,000 Serbs and Montenegrin residents of Kosova stage mass protest over alleged harassment by Kosovar Albanians.

## 1981

Albanians in Kosova riot, asking for equal rights in Yugoslavia; many students are arrested and many killed.

At least nine people die and hundreds are injured. Troops sent in and martial law briefly imposed.

## 1974

New Yugoslav constitution grants Kosova autonomy, but not independence.

## 1968

Kosovar Albanian students, encouraged at being given a first tentative measure of self-rule, stage mass protests.

## 1945

After German forces are driven out of Yugoslavia, around 10,000 Albanians fight for independence they were promised by Serbs. 40,000 Yugoslav troops sent by Tito to suppress this movement and take control of Kosova. Rebellion is suppressed with heavy casualties.

Hundreds of thousands of Albanians are subsequently deported to Turkey and dozens are killed in various incidents in the 1950s.

## 1941

Yugoslavia is invaded by Germany and its allies and divided into puppet states.

## 1912

Serbia joins other Balkan states in war to drive Ottoman Empire out of Europe. They win the war and Serbia re-acquires Kosova.

Austria insists that Serbia and Montenegro give up part of their newly conquered territory to form independent Albania.

Between first and second World Wars, Serbians attempt to consolidate their hold on Kosova by expelling Albanians, Muslims and Turks.

Land reform program gives property of those expelled and other large land-owners to Serb colonists.

## 1850

Serbian principality is given full autonomy from Ottoman Empire.

## 1389

Prince Lazar, legendary Serb hero, leading army of Serbs, Albanians and other nations, is defeated by Turks in Kosova.

This marks the beginning of the end of the medieval Serb nation. Serbia is ruled by Turkey for next 500 years, and Kosova for first time begins to take its place at heart of Serbian nationalist history.

Sources: [www.kosovo.org](http://www.kosovo.org); Associated Press.



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## Back To Baghdad

Continued from page 59

demure smile on her face began, with the drill instructor's help, to dismantle the rifle. Quite surprisingly, she did rather well considering the drill instructor practically moved her hands for her.

Next was marching. Each of the women took turns learning how to march with the weapon. These women were, our handler told us, the vanguard against any U.S. attack against Iraq.

"They can, and will, fight to protect their homes," he said.

One woman told us how she couldn't wait to kill her first American soldier. We straight-faced responded that she shouldn't worry about dirtying her hands with such things because the last thing she would ever see in her life would probably be the words "Boeing" or "General Dynamics" as a cruise missile landed in her living room.

It was off to see the men. Three hundred or so local men, between the ages of 18 and 45, had shown up to receive basic small arms training at a soccer field down the street from the gym.

Again, as with the women, there was only one rifle for each 40 or so trainees. Did the Iraqi army have no more weapons left, or did the regime not trust its own citizens?

After an hour of watching the men go through basically the same paces as the women, we drove back to Baghdad hoping that our request to visit Saddam's hometown of Tikrit had been approved.

Word had it that the Allies had recently bombed Tikrit and caused severe damage to Ba'ath Party structures and Republican Guard barracks. We had also heard that a number of civilians were killed when an out-of-control smart bomb landed in someone's house.

If we couldn't get into Tikrit, we reasoned, then we'll settle for Basra or a trip to a veteran's hospital to speak with soldiers injured during the most recent Allied bombing.

Either one, we explained to press center director Shaker Falahi, would satisfy our needs.

All three requests, it turned out, would be denied. "Security reasons," Falahi told us.

While we were stopped from visiting the scene of any bombing and speaking first-hand with anyone who might have been there, we did manage — as an bonus — to pick up bits and pieces of information from various sources that provided a slim, but nonetheless fresh insight into the Iraqi army as it stands today.

### College On The Jihad Bill

Our-number one source was our driver, Fikrit, a 33-year-old London-educated Iraqi who completed pilot training for Iraqi airlines in July 1990, a month before Iraq invaded Kuwait and he lost any opportunity

to ever fly for a commercial airline.

"Anyone with enough money can buy his way out of the army," Fikrit said. "The army is for losers. Every boy must — if he can't get out — do 18 months in the army before he goes to college. For that he receives between \$700 and \$1,000.

Fikrit said that conscripts generally buy their own uniforms for about \$20, and get three meals a day consisting of rice, soup and bread that tasted like "stones."

"Republican Guard soldiers," Fikrit said, "must serve two years before college and three years afterwards. They get about \$2,000 for their service, and some benefits like a good apartment or a car."

When pressed for information concerning what effects Desert Fox had on the military, Fikrit said he couldn't tell us.

"You are American, and I cannot tell you everything," Fikrit said. "I don't like what's going on here now, but I still love my country. You know how it is."

### Glimpse Of The Unknown

We knew exactly what he was saying, but luckily for us the next morning on our round-about way to the Iraqi national tomb of the unknown soldier, Fikrit drove us past a sprawling Republican Guard compound near the new ministry of defense and what we saw brought smiles to our face.

Through the trees that bordered the compound we could easily make out row after row of barracks and bunkers that looked as if they had been vaporized by some sort of science-fiction weapon.

"That's the brigade that Uday [Hussein] oversees directly," Fikrit said as we sped past. "If you play with fire ..."

The Iraqi tomb of the unknown soldier is a huge monument to the countless tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers who lost their lives during the eight-year Iran/Iraq war, or the "first Gulf war," as the Iraqis call it.

"I don't know the exact numbers of me who died during the war," Kareem told us as we walked up the steps towards the tomb's entrance, "but I don't know any family who wasn't touched."

Inside the tomb, about three stories below the monument itself, is the museum and the white marble wall inscribed with the names of all those Iraqi soldiers known to have perished. It's an awe-inspiring sight. No ranks. No dates. Just names. Tens of thousands of them.

"Where are the widows and families of those who died?" we asked Kareem. "Don't they come to pay honor?"

"They are too many to fit in this room," he answered. "This was the beginning of the end for us. Before we were rich and powerful. I studied in Mexico. Now look at Iraq. We are weak. My brother is here somewhere. I don't know where. I cannot find the strength to look for his name. I guess I am too tired."

Chief Foreign Correspondent Mark H. Milstein filed this report from Baghdad. ✕

Continued from page 51

container. By this means rotate the lever upward until the gas cylinder can be lifted out. Use of the cleaning kit container as a pry prevents marring the weapon's finish. After cleaning, lubricate lightly. Never put lubricant of any kind in the gas cylinder or on the piston of any gas-operated weapon. Re-assemble in the reverse order.

The ammunition used in our test and evaluation of the VEPR .308 was provided by Black Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3090, Rapid City, SD 57709-3090; phone: 605-348-5150; fax: 605-348-9827 —



VEPR's front sight assembly sleeves over the barrel and is held in place by a single cross-pin. The round, post-type front sight is that of the Kalashnikov series and has protective ears. It can be adjusted for elevation zero by screwing it up (to lower the point of impact) or down (to raise the point of impact) in its base.

call for information about purchasing direct at retail if there is no Black Hills distributor near you). We selected 168-grain boat-tail hollow-points (BTHP) without moly-coating, as a considerable number of rounds must be fired before the bore has been sufficiently coated for any effects of the molybdenum disulphide can be detected.

This carbine fired consistent 1.25 MOA three-shot groups at 100 meters. This is very good, especially so as the Kalashnikov series has been severely criticized in the West for its supposedly mediocre accuracy potential.

Perceived recoil is no more than moderate. Reliability and durability are not at question with any Kalashnikov-type rifle, which is a robust and completely reliable design. The ejection pattern is typical of all Kalashnikovs, to the rear on the shooter's right side and quite violent: about 20 feet back.

Complete with a leather sling, scope mount with rings, cleaning kit, oil bottle and one each of the 5- and 10-round magazines, the VEPR .308 rifle or carbine carries a suggested retail price of \$699.95. Those looking for a compact semiautomatic hunting rifle, or a shoulder-mounted weapon for their Y2K stash, would be hard pressed to find a better value than the VEPR .308. It's also very much an important piece of Kalashnikov history and it can be found on pages 200-201 of the encyclopedic *Kalashnikov Arms* recently reviewed in *SOF*. ❧

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*Continued from page 39*

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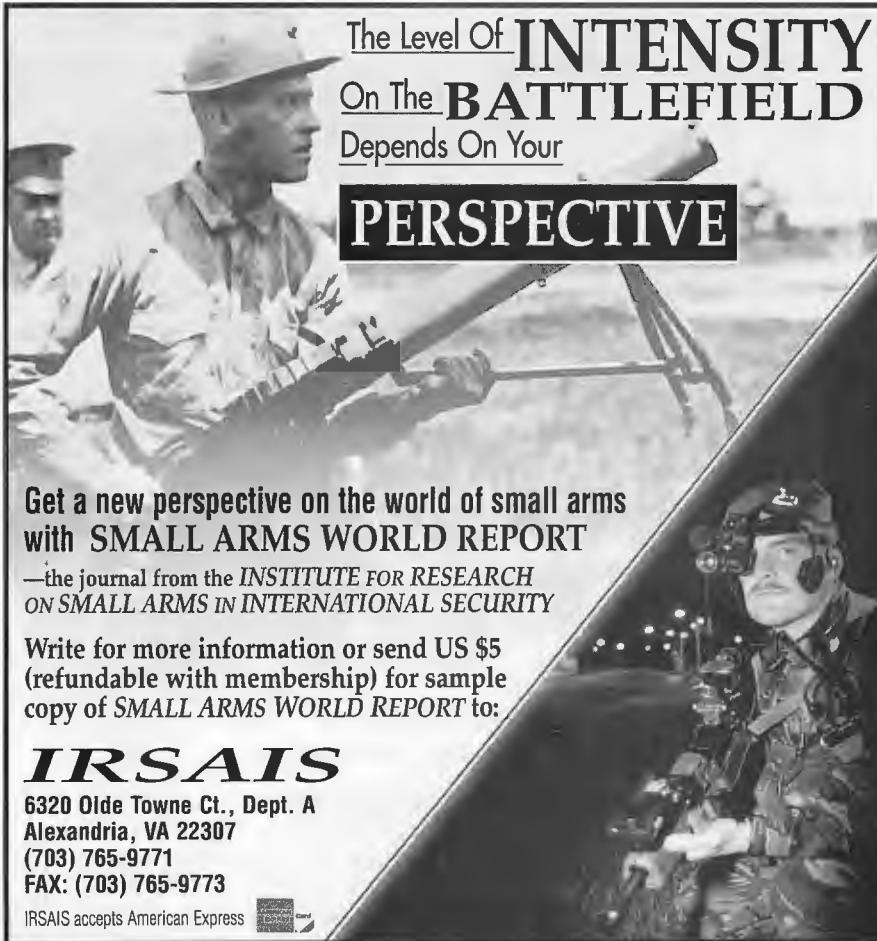
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ing violence. Most notably:

- April 1987: Bombed the central bus station in Colombo, killing 106 people and wounding nearly 300 others.

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## Africa

Distinguishing terrorism from tribal slaughter on the Dark Continent is much akin to separating fly poop from pepper. The faintly remembered Kenyan Mau Mau pale in comparison to the new breed of butchers. A good example is Algeria, where since the early 1990s, when the ruling socialist National Liberation Front (FLN) threw out election results that would have turned over power to the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), Algeria has been hard hit by an especially gruesome series of terrorist attacks that spare no one. The elderly, women, children and babies are slaughtered with equal abandon.

Numerous radical groups, many split off from the FIS, such as the Armed Islamic Movement (MIR), Armed Islamic Group (GIR), and Movement for an Islamic State, have set out to overthrow the secular FLN regime and replace it with a fundamentalist Islamic state. Besides a 1994 Air France hijacking, and scores of bombings across the country (as well as some in France, Algeria's former colonial master), these groups are particularly fond of bloody nighttime raids in which kidnapping and throat-slitting are *de rigueur*.

## Egypt

Dedicated to overthrowing the Mubarak government for a fundamentalist Islamic state are the *Al-Gama'a Al-Islamiyya* (Islamic Group), who operate primarily in southern Egypt, and the Cairo-based *Al-Jihad* (Jihad Group). In addition to bombing campaigns and random shootings, these groups gained worldwide attention with a series of vicious attacks on foreign tourists.

*(The final segment in this series will address Middle Eastern terrorism; factors affecting terrorism; the CBR threat; electronic/computer terrorism; changing roles of the media; the future of domestic and international terrorism; and counter-terrorism forces such as GSG-9, SAS, Delta, Naval Special Warfare Development Group, and GIGN.)*

*Richard L. Sherrow is SOF's Contributing Editor for Forensic Sciences.*

## Serb Threat Assessment

Continued from page 65

of 1995, hastily organized and under-armed Croatian and Bosnian units drove the bulk of the Yugoslav Army (85,000 of whom had switched their Yugoslav National Army insignia for Bosnian Serb Army insignia in 1993) all the way back to Serbia.

Analysts, particularly in the news media, are always trying to mitigate the Serbs' ignoble defeat by insisting that the Croats became formidable under the tutelage of MPRI, a State Department-approved military consulting firm comprised of former U.S. Army people. The basic assumption was that the Croats couldn't have kicked the Serbs' butts without American help. And it was good for MPRI's image to not dispute those reports, but in fact at that time the extent of MPRI's involvement with Croatia was in an effort to use its influence to open up slots for Croats in various European military training courses. The Croats didn't prevail because they were such a great army; they prevailed because the Serbs had such a bad army.

Okay, but what about the here and the now? What exactly should NATO ground troops be prepared to face when they inevitably have to enter Kosovo? The Yugoslavs could field as many as 300,000 regulars, reserves and police, and some of them, particularly the special police units, may decide to die for Kosovo. But is the Yugoslav army a viable fighting force? Could the Yugoslav army have reorganized, re-equipped, retrained and steered itself into a dynamic, efficient and fearsome fighting unit during the four years since Bosnia?

Belgrade would have to overcome a number of fairly serious obstacles. First of all, the Yugoslav army lost a major portion of its combat arms, NCOs and field-grade officers during the disintegration of Yugoslavia. That is because the combat arms were heavily comprised of Muslims, Macedonians, Croats and Slovenes. Secondly, while all of the breakaway republics have adopted western military methodology and equipment, the 85,000-man Yugoslav army is still operating on the old Soviet model with 25- to 50-year-old Soviet equipment.

Most of the 200-plus tanks currently deployed with Yugoslav forces are T-70 and T-50 series. Belgrade traded most of their T-80 series to the Iraqis. Fortunately, we understand T-70 and T-50 series tanks. The A-10s got onto them fairly well in the Kuwaiti desert and the Baghdad-Basra road was littered with them, all riddled by depleted uranium projectiles. Unless the Yugoslavs somehow managed to regain air superiority, their armor will be destroyed in a similar manner if it is exposed.

There really is not much chance that Yugoslav forces could ever regain air superiority. They have a technically backward



Lt. Col. Robert K. Brown, USAR (Ret.)  
Publisher, Soldier Of Fortune

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air force at best. In air to ground actions from the time they were bombing Zagreb in 1991 until they quit flying in Bosnia, they only rarely hit what they tried for. In Bosnia every day they bombed the bridge across the Sava at Bosanski Brod and after nearly two months there were lots of craters in the vicinity but only a few holes in the structure.

### Sarin Gas A Credible Threat

After the very first, when U.S. Air Force fast movers flew a sortie over Bosnia, no one ever saw a Yugoslav military aircraft in the air again over Bosnia. In the first days of the Kosovo war, the Yugoslavs tried us out and lost half of the MiG 29s in their arsenal. It is unlikely that they would try to put anything else into the air.

There are several credible threats that the Yugoslavs can make. The Yugoslav army does have stockpiles of nerve agent and they are sophisticated about deploying it. Another danger is that they could attempt to blow up the nuclear power plant near Krsko in Slovenia. Vojislav Seselj, the Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister, has previously threatened to do that.

Even if the Serbs have managed to miraculously become a first-rate fighting force, what will be left to fight after the bombing campaign is finished? Probably just about enough of them to surrender in their jockey shorts but probably not enough to inflict many casualties among NATO forces.

*John Hogan served with 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam.* ✕

## Let The Bombs Begin

Continued from page 43

NATO. It was surreal, but only lasted seconds with the anti-regime protesters running away after smashing a portrait of Slobodan Milosevic and beating a photographer who made pictures of the incident.

No bombing of Belgrade this evening.

*Day Seven, 30 March 30:* Someone tells me that it "takes longer to commit justice, then it does to commit a crime."

Rest of the day is a non-photo event. Primakov visits with Milosevic, then leaves after only three hours of talks. No bombing in Belgrade this evening.

### No Front Lines

*Day Eight, 31 March 31:* Go on another Yugoslavian army-sponsored "photo safari," this time to Kragujevac and Caçak. Both towns were hit last night, and the Serbs are eager to show the international media the damage. In Kragujevac a mass demonstration is under way when we arrive. About 40,000 locals have shown up at a field just behind an army maintenance facility lightly damaged the night before by smart weapons. Three large craters mark the spot where the buildings used to be.

We comment that the target was a bit odd, considering that a nearby parking lot with dozens of APCs and trucks was untouched. The garages, it turned out after close examination, were empty at the time of the bombing. We surmise the Serbs knew the strike was coming.

While we're there, three loud explosions reverberate from nearby hills. Smoke columns appear on the horizon. It's the nature of a high-tech war. No front lines. No soldiers. Just smart bombs and cruise missiles making pin-point strikes from hundreds of miles away. It makes for a very sterile theater of operations.

Two hours later we're in Caçak, at the Sloboda factory. Sloboda's director, Mr. Radomir Ljubic, tells us that the factory made women's hair dryers, stoves and vacuum cleaners. He even shows us their nearly vaporized production lines. Ljubic tells us that last night 12 cruise missiles slammed into the factory, putting thousands out of work and causing "\$700 million in damage."

We're impressed by the damage. The cruise missiles left 10 holes nearly 30 feet deep at the point of each impact. The buildings were shredded like Lincoln Logs put through a wood pulper. Three buildings in the campus-like factory complex, however, are red-taped as off-limits and guarded by local police. When we ask to enter, we were told that the buildings contained unexploded ordnance. "Another baby milk factory," an SOF friend opines, in reference to U.S. bombing of Baghdad during the Gulf War.

Back to Belgrade. The city is quiet, but NATO says it will begin tonight to target government buildings. They didn't lie, and

all night the hotel is shaken by bomb blasts and noise as Belgrade's suburbs are rocked by cruise missiles and smart bombs.

### April Fool!

*Day Nine, 1 April:* Wake up to news that Yugoslavian forces have captured three U.S. army soldiers who were on patrol along the Yugoslav-Macedonian border as part of a United Nations mission there.

No word on how they were captured has reached Belgrade, but the Serb propaganda machine is in full swing, making much of the arrest. Serbian TV says the three will be taken to Kosovo's capital of Pristina for trial.

Serbian TV also reports that a strategic bridge over the Danube River in Novi Sad has been destroyed during overnight NATO bombing.

Out of money and sorely needing a rest, I begin the normally three-hour drive from Belgrade to the Hungarian border. The Yugoslavian army says the road is open but as I approach Batajnica air base, I am forced on to a secondary road because the highway is still being used as a runway for MiGs.

I pass through a Yugoslavian national park before descending into the outskirts of Novi Sad. I pass a sprawling Yugoslav army facility on my right that has been reduced to splinters by overnight bombing. Only a few soldiers mill around, fending off looters or nosy journalists.

As I meander toward the only bridge still standing over the Danube, I am flagged down at a MUP checkpoint. Game over. A backup unit arrives a few minutes later and I'm driven to a small police barracks in the northern part of the city.

I'm interrogated, beaten and left with my cell phone still in my jacket pocket on the cold, cement floor of a holding cell. I won't be home in Budapest tonight. April Fool.

*Day 10, 2 April:* Twenty-two long hours pass, punctuated by two air raids and a 0200 visit by plain-clothes paramilitary police who tussle with my captors over taking me to the second bridge where they want to use me as a human shield. Thank God, cooler heads prevail.

I try to sleep, but my captors persist in spitting on and kicking me between their shots of *shlivawitz*, the local plum brandy. At 0515 another air raid commences and I'm again brought in for more questioning. I'm told that I will probably be taken to Pristina by the Yugoslavian army, who wants to put me together with the three U.S. servicemen taken hostage the day before.

I pray for a miracle, and later that afternoon am told that I can leave. The Swedish embassy, which is handling U.S. affairs in Yugoslavia, has arranged for my release.

My imprisonment this time is over, but the NATO campaign to force Yugoslavian compliance is far from completing its mission.

*A resident of Budapest and fine gulags everywhere, Mark H. Milstein is SOF's Chief Foreign Correspondent.* ✕

## Big Bucks In Brutality

Continued from page 47

the roads mined — managed to ferry so much hardware into Angola's heartland. Obviously, he did so under the noses of the enemy and it says much for the tenacity and spirit of his revolutionary organization. Tchinguendo said that whenever UN monitors arrived at UNITA bases, the big stuff would be secreted in the long grass.

An interesting sidelight here is the disclosure by Pretoria's Institute for Security Studies that over a period of years, there have been sightings of military supplies destined for UNITA being off-loaded and stored in warehouses owned by Taiwanese fishing companies in Nacala, a port in northern Mozambique. Again, some of this stuff was Bulgarian. There were also weapons and ammunition from South Africa. All were flown into Angola in DC-3s and other South African-based transport planes and if their route crossed Zambia, refueling would have been essential. Thus Lusaka's leaders would have known about them.

### Wars That Spread

Those who know Africa well have long been aware that these conflicts always escalate beyond national frontiers. Exactly the same conundrum holds for President Kabila's DRC (formerly Zaire).

So far, nine countries have been sucked into this maelstrom which is further from being settled than ever. Helping DRC government forces are Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Chad and, clandestinely, the Sudan (in a bid to divert the focus from its own tribal war in the south). Uganda, Rwanda and, on the periphery, Burundi, give succor to the rebels. Mercenaries from South Africa, the Ukraine, Serbia, Bosnia, France, Germany and elsewhere are fighting on both sides.

South Africa, meanwhile, has been supplying weapons to several of those involved. For instance, a dozen RG-31 Nyala IFVs were sent to Burundi late last year. Nobody is prepared to tell whom, at \$200,000 a throw, paid for them. The Nyalas are to be seen in just about every TV news clip of the region.

There are other wars involving foreign interests on the continent, like Lesotho, where the South African Army launched a botched invasion to quell a junior-officer putsch. The Israelis are active in several hot-spots on the Horn of Africa and elsewhere, including Eritrea, while some European intelligence sources maintain that bin Laden's agents are again on the move in Somalia and the Sudan.

Elsewhere in East Africa, there have been clashes on Kenya's borders, first with dissident Somalis and, more recently, Ethiopian troops. South African arms salesmen have been active here too, dumping surplus mine-protected vehicles. Farther to the west, in Burundi, a low-key insurgency

takes a toll in combatants and innocents.

On the west coast of Africa, the future of Senegal's Casamance Province remains in dispute, as it has for 16 years. This low-key insurgency has involved a lot of French nationals over the years, usually assisting government forces. In Guinea-Bissau, to the immediate south, several African states have nurtured a civil war during the past year that has all but destroyed the country.

Then there is Nigeria, always on the brink. Lagos claims foreign agents have fanned dissent among some of the tribes in southeastern oil-producing states.

Nigeria does have a propensity for great violence. While on assignment with the now-defunct Executive Outcomes in Sierra Leone and Angola three years ago, I was told by their executive director, Lafras Luitingh, that the company had been approached by Nigerian dissidents who were eager to end the rule of the tyrant Abacha by force. They offered the mercenary group \$100 million (in cash or gold) to train an army which, ultimately, could overthrow the government. EO declined, maintaining that it worked only for recognized governments. Instead, had these people approached the Ukrainian group whose mercenaries are now involved in a number of African conflicts, the story might have been quite different.

A spokesman for the Ukrainian government told the British newspaper *Guardian* in January that, indeed, its citizens were involved in several African conflicts. The report stated that hundreds, "possibly thousands of former Soviet soldiers" had gone abroad to fight. The reason given was that they were cheap and, more important (like South African veterans five years ago) very much in demand. "The temptation to retire and work abroad is difficult to resist," the report stated.

Sierra Leone has seen a lot of mercenaries come and go over the years. Among them were personnel attached first to Executive Outcomes and then to Britain's Sandline.

One of the first to arrive was independent operator Bob MacKenzie, an American Vietnam veteran who in his day had fought for the Rhodesians, with the Renamo rebels in Mozambique, in El Salvador and elsewhere. MacKenzie's first action in Sierra Leone saw him wounded and killed by the rebels. The first South African mercenary group, mostly black with white officers, arrived barely a month later. By then the rebels were on the outskirts of Freetown.

It took Executive Outcomes less than a fortnight to clear the coast of rebels, killing hundreds in a succession of precision helicopter gunship strikes that caused the rest to flee. A couple of weeks later, with an EO force of 87 men at the van and accompanied by squads of government soldiers — most of them, as usual, sky-high on local gin and ganja — the rebel army was driven out of the Kono diamond fields, 300 kms into the interior.

The rest is history.

*Al J. Venter is a senior SOF foreign correspondent.* ☒

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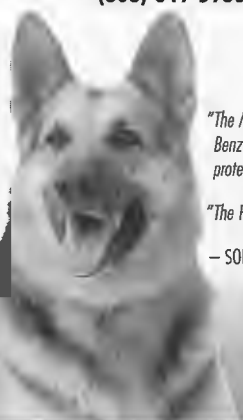
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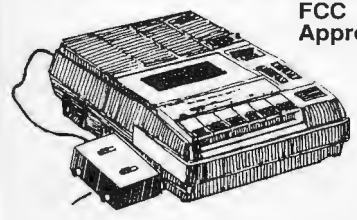
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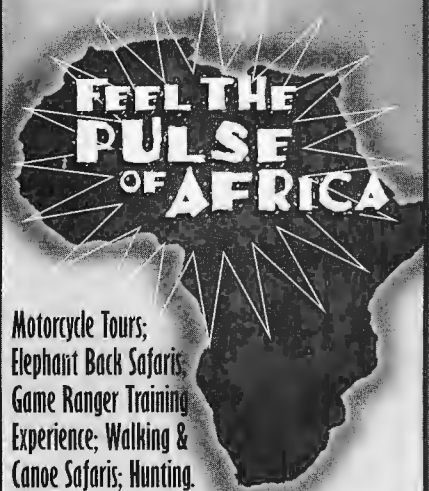
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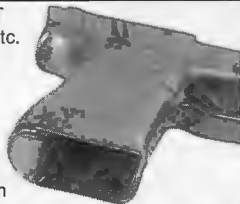
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## Do It Right Or Fill Bodybags

Last week Bill Clinton asked the nation to pray for our three soldiers who were captured by the Serbs. While I'm all for prayers, it's more important for all our soldiers who are now in the Yugoslavian killing field — and those who'll soon deploy there as mission creep ratchets into mission panic — for Congress to ask the generals why these three warriors were snatched in the first place.

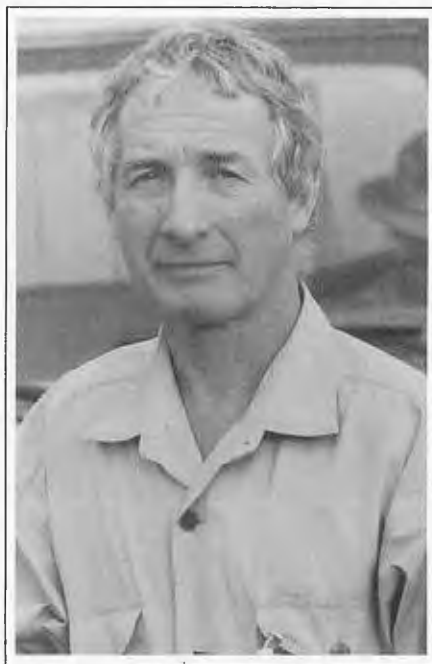
Their throwing up their hands and shouting, "I surrender!" without a fight just doesn't pass the smell test. These were not three recruits who would turn into jelly and throw down their weapons when slugs sung over their heads. All were experienced soldiers from a crack reconnaissance squadron, scouts who had been in Macedonia for months before their UN mission was canceled and they swapped their blue helmets for NATO war green. They knew the terrain and had been conducting the same mission for weeks. They were a special unit on a war footing, so close to the fight in Kosovo that they could hear the Serb artillery rumbling and smell the cordite from the explosions. They were indeed in a dangerous place and receiving hazardous duty pay accordingly.

Congress should ask:

- Why were the three scouts in a hazardous zone without their tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles, which are sitting in a motor pool in Germany? (A question I asked the Pentagon two weeks ago.)
- Why were they on patrol by themselves in just one extremely vulnerable Humvee (the 1990s' Jeep) without at least three more vehicles — each with mounted machine guns — each covering the others?
- Where was the backup force which is normally on high alert, ready to reinforce when the inevitable cow dung hits the fan?
- What were the ROE (Rules of Engagement)? Were their weapons locked and loaded? Did the soldiers have clear orders to fire if threatened or fired upon?
- Why weren't there dead Serbs on the ground?

Trained soldiers don't just throw up their hands and allow themselves to be led away like sheep. They had time to report on the radio, "We're taking direct fire! We're trapped! They're all around us!" If they had time to yak, then they had time to squeeze their triggers.

Heads should roll. Especially the heads of the American and British generals in Macedonia who hung them out to dry by giving



*Col. David Hackworth, (Ret.) also writes a syndicated weekly column titled "Defending America." "Hack" doesn't pull any punches and many liberal rags won't carry his writing. If your local paper falls into that category, call the editor and let him know you'd like to see "Defending America" on the Op-Ed page. It's syndicated by King Features, 235 E. 45<sup>th</sup> St., New York, NY 10017.*

them too much to do without the right stuff to do the job. Our forces in Bosnia have been taking the type of precautions outlined above for four years. When I patrolled against the Serbs in the late 1940s, less than 300 miles to the North of Macedonia, we did as well because even then a favorite Serb trick was the old hostage snatch.

When we were hit we shot back. Contrary to the hype of the Army's mantra of today, we indeed fought as we trained. We had it drummed into us by our World War II veteran NCOs: "Kill or be killed."

And The Code of Conduct was imprinted on our very being: "I will never surrender of my free will."

Since World War II, the ROE and "the more sweat on the training field, the less blood on the battlefield" type of training have been watered down by nervous commanders more concerned for their careers than their soldiers' safety.

When my Screaming Eagle brigade deployed to Vietnam in 1965, General Westmoreland's order was: "You can't fire until the enemy fires first."

In my battalion's first fight, a paratroop sergeant had to jump up on a wall and wave to cause three Viet Cong who were goofing off to slap leather. Not following Westy's orders, he killed all three the second they went for their guns.

In Lebanon, in 1983, 241 warriors were killed by a truck bomb. The sentry on the front gate wasn't allowed to carry a loaded weapon. The same thing happened in Saudi Arabia in 1996, when 18 airmen were killed and more than 400 wounded by a terrorist attack.

I've gotten too many reports over the years of how our armed forces are losing their warrior edge, and a rucksack full of complaints that the troops are no longer being trained — as "Private Ryan's" generation was — for *real* combat.

Let's hope the snafu in Macedonia isn't the first sign of a force no longer ready for war.

[Http://www.hackworth.com](http://www.hackworth.com) is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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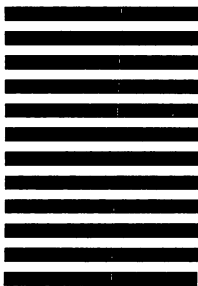




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